

THE FIRST 100 DAYS

LEAVING NO SPECIAL INTEREST BEHIND



APRIL 26, 2001



SPECIAL REPORT

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Chart: First 100 Days Progress Report for President Bush	4
I. Prosperity with a Purpose	6
A. Talked Down the Economy to Justify a Huge Tax Cut for the Wealthy	6
B. Bush Budget Fails in Promoting Economic Prosperity	8
C. Bush Holds Immediate Tax Cut Hostage to Passage of Bush Plan	9
D. Fails to Bring Forward a Real Plan to Bring Down Energy Prices	9
II. Leave No Child Behind	13
Tax Cuts	13
Child Care/Early Learning	13
Head Start	14
Education	14
Health Care	15
Nutrition	16
Social Services	16
Digital Divide	17
Juvenile Justice	17
Welfare	17
III. Not Compassionate– Really Just Conservative	18
A. The Face of The Administration	18
B. Change the Tone	20
Environmental Assault	
Bush Overturns Reduction of Arsenic in the Water	21
Hardrock Mining	22
Clean Air Regulations – Flip-Flopping on CO2	23
Kyoto Protocol	23
Bush Administration Fighting Against Forest Protection	24
Environmental Budget Cuts	25
Backtracking on School Lunch Salmonella Rollback	25
Repeal of Workplace Safety Regulation & Other Anti-Labor Actions	26
Resorting to Playing Hardball	27
Ramming through Ergonomics	
TV Ads against Dem Senators	
Pulling Norwood off PBOR	

C. Not a Uniter, Just a Divider	28
Partisan Tax Cuts for His Wealth Contributors	29
Patients' Bill of Rights	30
Bush Fails to Lead on Election Reform & Census	31
Bush's Anti-Choice Agenda	33
Closing White House Minority Offices	35
Bowing to Conservatives on Judicial Appointments	36
Divisive Budget Cuts (Digital Divide, New Markets, EEOC)	37
D. Reformer With Results	38
Not a Reformer	38
Campaign Reform	39
Election Reform	40
Managed Care Reform	40
Where are the Results? Bush's Priorities Are Sputtering	41
Prescription Drugs	41
Faith-Based Initiative	43
Social Security Reform	44
E. Appendix	
In Their Own Words, Bush, Cheney Talking Down the Economy	46
100 days & Foreign Policy	47

First 100 Days: Leaving No Special Interest Behind

A Progress Report for President Bush

The first one hundred days has been the standard by which the Presidency has been judged since the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt. George W. Bush campaigned on themes emphasizing that he was a centrist, a man of the people, but most importantly a leader who would preserve of honor and dignity of the office. His primary political goal was to put a friendly face on the Republican party.

Specifically, the Bush campaign themes were as follows: Prosperity with a purpose; Leave no child Behind; Compassionate conservative; Uniter Not a Divider; Change the Tone of Washington; and Reformer with Results. The rhetoric has not been backed up by the reality of the first 100 days.

"I rarely have seen as large a gap between campaigning and governing as I have with George Bush," says Rutgers political scientist Ross K. Baker. "As president, he is vastly more conservative than he presented himself in the campaign." (*U.S. News and World Report*, 4/9/01)

He has chosen to govern from a narrow right-wing base, rather than from the inclusive center. (*David Ignatius, Washington Post*, 4/4/01)

All those pro-business folks who drowned Bush in money during his campaign are getting a better return on their political dollars than they could have dreamed of in their gaudiest fantasies. (*Judy Mann, Washington Post*, 4/11/01)

After the closest election in the nation's history, Bush promised to be bipartisan. Instead of following through on his word, President Bush is working hand in hand with the Republicans controlling Congress.

Senate Majority Whip Nickles said, "the [Republican] majority will set the agenda, and the majority will jump to deliver for President Bush. It's that simple." (*Congress Daily*, 11/8/00)

Majority Whip Tom DeLay said, "We will act the same way we have been. We'll write conservative bills and ask the Democrats to participate." (*Washington Post*, 12/7/00)

Rep. John Doolittle said "The power of the presidency, coupled with a Republican Congress and conservative control of the Supreme Court is nothing short of awesome. This is the implementation of the rest of the 'Contract with America'" (*Washington Post*, 12/7/00)

Not since Newt Gingrich first took the Speaker's chair have we seen such an agenda catering to the conservative base and special interests as if political victory required immediate payoff. However, this time the threat is graver, as the GOP controls both end of Pennsylvania Avenue. As Majority Whip Tom Delay summed it up, **"The things we've been dreaming about we can now do. We have the House, we have the Senate, we have the White House, which means we have the agenda."** (*Los Angeles Times*, 12/7/00).

And together President Bush and congressional Republicans, instead of changing the tone of Washington, have worked hand in hand with the conservative right wing, and the special interests that put them in power. So much so that even the conservative Judicial Watch has filed a criminal complaint with the Justice Department against the National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC) and House Republican Whip Tom DeLay of Texas for "illegal activities in selling meetings with Bush administration officials for political campaign contributions." As former Secretary of Labor Robert Reich has put it "Business is in complete control of the machinery of government. The House, the Senate and the White House are all run by business-friendly Republicans who are deeply indebted to American business for their electoral victories." (*Reich, New York Times, 3/18/01*)

The result is that to date, the Bush Administration has accomplished much for special interests and nothing to help families. And in fact, the few things that have actually occurred have been against the interests of America's families.

Instead of proposing a program of prosperity with a purpose, Bush and his administration have talked down the economy in order to enact a tax cut that could lead us back to federal budget deficits and threatens the economy. At the same time, Bush has put forward a budget plan that puts tax cuts for the wealthy first, and puts efforts to shore up the long-term economy and invest in our future last.

Education was Bush's hallmark issue as a way to show that he was a different kind of Republican. However, education has been put in abeyance while Bush has barnstormed across the country to market his tax cuts. And in the budget, Bush's commitment to education funding is being sacrificed at the altar of tax cuts. This along with cuts in other children's programs leave questions about Bush's campaign commitment to "leaving no child behind."

Bush has filled his Administration with right-wing conservatives and wealthy CEOs, to ensure that those who elected him are at the decisionmaking table.

Instead of being compassionate and bipartisan, Bush is pushing an anti-environmental agenda. Instead of working in a bipartisan way, Bush is playing political hardball by pushing a highly partisan and divisive tax cut. Instead of developing a balanced energy package, he has a secret task force that is reportedly going to propose more drilling, and less environmental protection. Instead of changing the tone in Washington, Bush is busy undermining worker safety on behalf of big contributors. Instead of supporting a united bipartisan coalition on managed care reform, he has thrown up a road block to getting this important bill done – threatening to veto a bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights. In each of these cases the Bush Administration has followed the agenda presented by special interests rather than the one George W. Bush campaigned on.

Instead of being a uniter by reaching out to women and minorities, Bush is being divisive by catering to the extreme right wing. For example, Bush has shown no leadership on making every vote count, or counting all Americans; and has brought in the conservative Federalist Society members to make judicial appointments.

Finally, while he promised to be a reformer with results, Bush has failed on reform. On bipartisan campaign reform, Bush has announced principles that true reformers said were designed to defeat the bill. He has opposed bipartisan managed care reform, and failed to embrace election reform. And most significantly, he has no results. Bush came forward with the pharmaceutical industry's prescription drug plan, which was declared dead on arrival. Bush is still trying to figure out his ill-defined faith-based Initiative, and Bush has failed to come forward with a Social Security reform plan, which he said was one of his top priorities in the campaign.

The First Hundred Days of the presidency of George W. Bush have been characterized by broken promises, and political payoffs to the special interests and the right wing. This report measures the President's first hundred days based his own campaign themes, demonstrating that the promises described by the newly inaugurated President on January 20 have not been realized.

Democrats hope the next 1360 days will be better. Democrats hope to return to an era of bipartisanship in which we will work together to address the problems of America's families. Democrats want to work with President Bush to:

- fund excellent education for our children,
- to increase the minimum wage,
- enact a Medicare prescription drug benefit for all seniors,
- provide a responsible and fair tax cut for all families, and
- enact into law bipartisan managed care reform, election reform, and bipartisan campaign reform.

We stand ready to work with this President as we move into the next 100 days to realize these important goals on behalf of the working families, instead of the special interests.

First 100 Days Progress Report for President Bush: Leaving No Special Interest Behind

<i>Bush Priorities</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Education	Incomplete, Past Due	Said this was his top priority, but instead has made tax cuts his main focus. As a result, education bill is just starting to move through Congress. He has shortchanged funding for education programs in order to pay for the huge tax cut for the wealthy.
Tax Cut for Middle-Income Families	F, Overdue	Would be able to enact a fair and fiscally sound tax plan if he would work in a bipartisan way, but instead is playing hardball to push a huge tax cut for the wealthy contributors and businesses who financed his campaign. Specifically, businesses that are part of the Tax Reform Coalition gave nearly \$400,000 to the Bush campaign.
Military	F	Last summer said "Help is on the Way" but Bush has failed to come forward with his own plan to improve low morale, military pay, missile defense and strategic review key priorities. At the beginning of the year rejected the Joint Chiefs of Staff proposed supplemental appropriation to address many of these priorities.
Social Security	F	Has done nothing more than pay lip-service in the State of the Union.
Medicare Reform/Prescription Drugs	F	Has failed to come forward with a Medicare Reform proposal. Put forward a temporary placebo prescription drug plan that even Republicans declared dead on arrival on behalf of the Pharmaceutical Industry, which contributed \$1.4 million to the Bush campaign and \$17.8 million to Republicans
Faith-Based Initiative	D	After making it a cornerstone of the campaign, everyone realized that the Bush principles sounded better than is practical to implement, and has received a cool reception in both Congress and from religious leaders.

Other Priorities		
Environmental Protection	F-minus	Has rolled back a series of environmental protection regulations including arsenic in drinking water and he has done this on behalf of the chemical, mining, timber, and the oil and gas industries, which gave the Bush campaign \$3 million, and Republicans almost \$50 million.
Worker Safety	F	Repealed worker safety standards (ergonomics) in order to please business and employer groups that contributed \$2 million to the Bush campaign, and \$28.3 million to Republicans.
Energy	F	Has an Energy Task Force that is secretly developing an energy plan that is pro-drilling, anti-environment, and pro-nuclear. Of course, big oil gave \$3.2 million to the Bush campaign, and \$25.6 million to Republicans.
Patients' Bill of Rights	F	Promised to block and veto meaningful bipartisan bill on behalf of the Health Benefits Coalition, which contributed \$2.7 million to the Bush campaign and \$41.7 million to Republicans
Reform with Results: Campaign Finance Reform	F	Is it any wonder? Passage of meaningful campaign reform would break the link between special interest money and the way Washington works.
General Comments Has let special interests who financed his campaign -- including the right wing conservatives who helped Bush in the difficult primaries -- assert control the agenda, and in the process has left American families behind.		

I. Prosperity With A Purpose

One of the key campaign themes for President Bush was to provide “prosperity with a purpose.” Instead of prosperity, Bush and his administration have been talking down the economy in order to enact a tax cut that could lead us back to federal budget deficits that threaten the economy. At the same time, Bush has put forward a budget plan that puts tax cuts for the wealthy first, and puts efforts to invest in our future and shore up the long-term economic last.

This huge tax cut not only fails to provide an immediate relief for working families but will crowd out much needed investments for both the short-term and long-term economy, like science and technology, small business, and job training. Further, it slashes agriculture assistance critical to shore up the struggling farm economy.

In addition, Bush appears to be intent on holding an immediate stimulative tax package hostage to enactment of his huge and risky tax package.

Finally, the Bush Administration instead of doing anything meaningful to bring down energy prices for consumers, has been talking about an energy policy designed for his special interest friends: The oil and gas industries, whose only green policy is increasing their cash profit margin at the expense of the environment.

A. Talked Down the Economy for a Huge Tax Cut for the Wealthy

Since the day the Bush administration learned that they would be in charge, they have been talking down the economy in order to justify their huge tax cuts.

“Last but perhaps not least among causes of the consumer funk is the administration's own determined pessimism. Mr. Bush has a bully pulpit, and he is using it to preach economic alarm. This adds powerfully to the chorus of doomsaying. And when it comes to short-term economics, believing can sometimes make it so. There's no mystery about why the administration is so eager to pronounce the economy flat on its back? Mr. Bush wants to use fear of recession to bully Congress into rushing through his tax cut, without worrying about little details like whether it would actually help, or whether we can actually afford it. But it's still a remarkable departure from the usual principles of economic policy. Has there ever before been a case of a U.S. administration deliberately undermining confidence for the sake of political advantage? (Paul Krugman, *New York Times*, 2/21/01)

Even though the economy has slowed down significantly in the last six months, the Bush tax cut will have virtually no impact on getting growth going again any time soon. The tax rate cuts in the Bush proposal deliver only \$18.3 billion in the first year – that will be barely noticeable in a \$10.4 trillion economy.

Rather, the Bush budget tax cut could have a negative impact on the long-term economy.

Skewed to the Wealthy – The Bush budget provides a massive tax cut that is skewed to the wealthiest American households – with 45% of the tax cut going to the top 1%; the top 1%, with incomes averaging more than \$1 million per year, will get an average tax cut of \$54,480. However, the 60 percent of American families that have incomes of \$44,000 or less would get little tax relief from the Republican plan, an average of \$251 per year. Further, the Bush plan provides no tax relief at all for 12.2 million families with children. Consumer spending the key to stimulating the economy, is focused in the middle-class. So a fair tax cut to all Americans would be better for the economy than Bush's tax cut for the wealthy, as well as more fair.

Based on 10-Year Uncertain Surplus Projections– Further the Bush tax cut is so big that it eats up virtually all of the uncertain 10 year projections of the non-Medicare and non-Social Security surplus. To make room for his huge tax cuts, the Bush budget counts on everything turning out right; there is no room for error here. If the economic and budget projections are as inaccurate as they have been in the past, it is likely there will be budget deficits because the tax cut is expected to use up such a large share of the available on-budget surpluses. Here's what the experts have said about the wisdom of relying on 10-year surplus projections:

Looking forward five or 10 years allows the Congress to consider the longer-term implication of policy changes. But it also increases the likelihood that the budgetary decisions will be made on the basis of projections that later turn out to have been far wrong. (Congressional Budget Office, January 2001)

Comptroller General David Walker recently warned members of the Senate Budget Committee, "no one should design tax or spending policies pegged to the precise number in any 10-year forecast." (Testimony before the Senate Budget Committee, 2/6/01)

As the Concord Coalition points out, the long-term budget projections are very uncertain. The Congressional Budget Office has been very helpful in pointing out three alternative baselines, all of which, they say, are reasonable over a 10-year period. There is a \$3 trillion variation over 10 years in these scenarios in the amount of the surplus.

Given that his huge tax cuts eat up virtually all of the projected surplus, the Bush budget clearly risks throwing the country back into deficit spending or raiding the Medicare or Social Security surplus. Going back to budget deficits could lead to higher interest rates and weaken the economy. We all know that keeping interest rates low is key to the economy and to ordinary families who pay interest every month on their credit cards and their car loans and home mortgages.

Moreover, Congressional Republicans are on the way to doubling President Bush's \$1.6 trillion in tax cuts, as they work to enact the Bush budget cuts. All along Republican leaders have pushed for even larger tax cuts. For example, Majority Whip Tom DeLay has said "The Bush plan is a great beginning, but it's a floor not a ceiling." (Press Release, 3/14/01)

B. Bush Budget Fails in Promoting Economic Prosperity

Not only does the tax cut threaten our economy with budget deficits and higher interest rates, the huge Bush tax cuts for the wealthy also out key investments important to the long-term and short-term economy

To make room for his tax cut, the Bush budget makes cuts in science & technology programs, which are key to the long-term future of the economy. For example, The Bush budget cuts the National Science Foundation (NSF) below the level needed to maintain purchasing power at the FY 2001 level. The National Science Foundation is a critically important agency in supporting scientific research across the country. The Bush budget also suspends the Advanced Technology Program, which was create to accelerate the commercialization of technology that promises significant economic benefit.

Further, to pay for his tax cuts, the Bush budget makes cuts in programs for small businesses, even though Bush has stated that the small business sector is the engine of the economy. Specifically, the Bush budget cuts the Small Business Administration's budget by 43% and makes up the majority of the loss by increasing fees to important programs that provide much needed access to capital for small businesses such as the 7(a) Loan Guaranty Program.

In addition, the Bush budget cuts job training programs to prepare adults and young people for work. For example, according the Economic Policy Institute, the Bush plan would reduce spending on adult job training opportunities for 54,000 adult workers, and would cut the youth training program. The adult job training program provides employment assistance for disadvantaged and low-income participants and the youth job-training program assists low-income youth in finding summer employment, year-round counseling, mentoring, and internship opportunities. Further, the Bush budget cuts funding to help nearly 110,000 dislocated workers.

Finally, the Bush budget provides no help for the troubled farm economy. The current farm recession is now entering its fourth year and ranks among the deepest since 1915. However, even though farmers have received more than \$27 billion over the past three years in emergency funding, the Bush budget fails to earmark any emergency income assistance for farmers. Instead, the Bush budget proposes that farmers compete with defense and other pressing national needs for the illusory "contingency fund" (which turns out to consist mostly of the supposedly off-limits Medicare Trust Fund.) The Bush budget also explicitly refuses the requests of national farm organizations to permanently increase agriculture funding over the next five years in the budget -- in order to acknowledge the continuing long-term needs of farmers for income assistance.

C. Bush Holds Immediate Tax Cut Hostage to Passage of Bush Plan

Finally, despite the fact that the current economic slowdown is the number-one concern of American families across the country, Bush has rejected Democratic proposals for a \$60 billion package of immediate tax relief. Instead, he is holding it hostage to passage of his \$1.6 billion tax plan in an all-or -nothing fashion.

“What’s going to happen is that Mr. Bush will try to take the economy hostage: he will insist that we can’t have an immediate tax cut ... unless we accept his whole plan. There’s no logical reason why: Congress can easily give each ordinary family a few hundred dollars now without agreeing to give individuals with million-dollar incomes \$50,000 tax breaks every year after 2006. But Mr. Bush and his allies will try to prevent Congress from taking any helpful short-run actions unless he gets it all.”

Economist Paul Krugman, Column, New York Times, 3/28/01

An immediate tax relief package for FY 2001 is the best way to get money into people’s pockets quickly – thereby giving the economy the “second wind” that so many analysts have been calling for. The President has even acknowledged that. At the same time that there is extraordinary consensus for an \$85 billion tax relief package for FY 2001, there is no bipartisan consensus for the President’s 10-year, highly-controversial \$2 trillion-plus tax cut package. In fact, the Senate scaled the tax cut back by \$400 billion indicating that there is not support for the Bush tax plan.

President Bush and the GOP Leadership have decided to hold the American taxpayer and economy hostage: insisting that there will be no immediate tax relief unless the President’s entire \$2 trillion-plus tax cut package is attached and enacted as well. By tying immediate tax relief to the President’s 10-year highly-controversial, \$2 trillion-plus tax cut package, President Bush and the GOP are ensuring that there will be no immediate tax relief enacted over the next several weeks.

D. Fails to Bring Forward a Real Plan to Bring Down Energy Prices

Bush and the Administration has sadly used the energy crisis as a means toward enacting a special interest agenda that undermines the environment. The Bush Administration has raised the specter of a major energy crisis to justify an unbalanced energy package that is all about big oil and drilling, and harmful to the environment.

ANWR – Specifically, President Bush in his budget has put forward one of big oil’s dream scenarios – opening the Arctic Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling. Often called “America’s Serengeti,” the pristine Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is home to hundreds of animal species. Scientists, environmentalists, and most Americans oppose drilling in the Refuge because it will damage an American treasure, threaten wildlife, and pollute the air and

water, while doing next to nothing to address America's energy needs. Now President Bush wants to overturn 30 years of protection for a supply of oil that the United States Geological Survey estimates wouldn't be available for ten years. If the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is opened to oil drilling, experts predict another Prudhoe Bay - a place that averages 320 oil spills a year, has produced 55 contaminated waste sites, and comprises hundreds of miles of infrastructure.

According to a recent bi-partisan survey, American voters oppose drilling for oil in the Arctic Refuge by a 52 to 35 percent margin. (**Mellman Group and Bellwether Research**) Even House Republicans acknowledge drilling in the Arctic Refuge isn't the answer to our energy problems.

Florida Oil Leasing – Further, the Bush administration has decided to move forward with a planned auction of offshore oil and gas leases in the Gulf of Mexico -- rejecting even an appeal from the President Bush's younger brother, Florida Gov. Jeb Bush. "I must consider our nation's energy needs and appropriate management of the American public's natural resources," Norton said in the letter to the younger Bush. The governor and Florida's congressional delegation wanted the lease sale canceled because of concerns over the environment. The parcels for sale are more than 100 miles offshore, and the oil and gas lobby has pushed for access to the area. The lease sale is scheduled for December and would be the first such auction since 1988.

Rollback of Energy Efficiency Standards – The Bush Administration announced that it would block a rule published by the Clinton administration requiring new central air-conditioners to be 30 percent more efficient and instead require that they be 20 percent more efficient. Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham said energy conservation goals needed to be balanced against the need to minimize "future price increases on consumers, particularly low-income consumers." However, according to the Energy Department, the retail price difference between models meeting the 30 percent standard is about \$123 for an appliance that generally costs \$2,000 to \$4,000. State governments in New York, California and Texas, worried about meeting summer electricity demands, had supported the 30 percent standard, reported the New York Times. (*New York Times*, 4/14/01; *Dept. of Energy Press Release*, 4/13/01)

Bush has argued that oil producers are suffering financial hardship due to compliance with environmental standards at a time when oil companies are reporting record profits. He is moving forward with proposals for more drilling, and has done nothing positive for America's families that will address the real energy problem:

! The Bush Administration has failed to act on rate caps for electricity in California or the Western United States. The law directs the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to act against unjustifiably high prices. But the Bush's chairman of the FERC has failed to take any real to bring price stability. Energy companies are making record profits. In fact, the California Independent System Operators (ISO) – the managers of the Western wholesale electricity market – have stated that there are over \$6 billion of potential overcharges for electricity sold in California alone. ([San Diego Tribune](#), 4/17/01)

- ! The Bush Administration failed with OPEC to bring down oil prices. Bush was unable to accomplish what he once attacked Clinton for failing to do: Persuade members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries to keep prices low and supply high. The member nations have decided to limit supply, which tends to keep prices up. In January of 2000 Bush said "What I think the president ought to do is he ought to get on the phone with the OPEC cartel and say, 'We expect you to open your spigots!'" (AP, 3/20/01)
- ! President Bush has rejected calls to release oil reserves in the Strategic Petroleum reserve that would help bring down oil price.

But most unfortunately, the Bush budget cuts programs that could help with the current energy problems--renewable energy, LIHEAP.

- ! **Slashes Energy Efficiency Programs** – President Bush has stated that the nation is experiencing an “energy crisis.” **And yet the Bush budget slashes funding for energy efficiency programs** – from developing appliance efficiency standards to research and development for the next generation of technologies in the construction, manufacturing and transportation sectors!! Specifically, the Bush budget slashes energy efficiency programs (other than weatherization grants) **by \$180 million or by 27%**– from \$663 million in FY 2001 to \$483 million in FY 2002. President Bush apparently fails to recognize the critically important role that energy efficiency programs can play in a balanced energy policy. Indeed, energy efficiency standards have saved American businesses and consumers some \$180 billion over the last two decades – more than \$200 for every dollar of federal money spent to develop them.
- ! **Slashes Renewable Energy Programs** – The Bush budget also slashes funding for renewable energy programs!! Specifically, the Bush budget slashes overall renewable energy programs **by \$96 million or by 26%** – from \$373 million in FY 2001 to \$277 million in FY 2002. Furthermore, within this overall cut, a number of specific renewable energy programs are cut even more drastically. For example, the Bush budget cuts hydropower research **by 49.9%**, solar energy research **by 53.7%**, and wind energy research **by 48.2%**. In addition, the Bush budget calls for **a 76% cut** in federal grants to state and local governments and public power systems to deploy existing renewable technologies.
- ! **LIHEAP:** Despite rising energy prices, the Bush budget freezes funding for the LIHEAP program (Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program) that helps low-income families pay their heating and cooling bills. Today, fewer than one in three eligible families get LIHEAP assistance.
- ! **Low-Income Weatherization:** During the Fall campaign, *Candidate* Bush called for a doubling of funds for the low-income weatherization program. *President* Bush unfortunately falls **\$40 million short** of that goal in 2002 alone – and \$450 million short over ten years. The Bush budget falls roughly 150,000 homes short of actually doubling the program over the next ten years. In fact, the Bush plan simply restores the program to the level it was at during the first two years of the Clinton

Administration, before it was severely cut when Republicans took control of Congress in 1995.

So why does President Bush insist on drilling in the Arctic and other pro-drilling, anti-environmental energy policy? Why does he pursue anti-consumer, anti-ratepayer budget policies? Because Bush is a big oil man from big oil country with lots of big oil friends. From the president on down, the West Wing is filled with former big oil executives: Bush was in the oil business in Texas, Vice President Cheney was CEO of Halliburton, Commerce Secretary Don Evans is a former Tom Brown executive, and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice was on the Chevron board of directors. (Chevron has even named one of their oil tankers after NSA Rice.) Others like Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham and Interior Secretary Gale Norton, were big oil money recipients when they ran for public office. For these power players and other top administration officials with big oil connections the answer to the pending energy crisis is drill, drill, drill. A balanced energy policy would promote conservation, renewables, and consumer relief.

In a *Los Angeles Times* opinion piece titled "It's Payback Time for Bush Contributors," Robert Scheer writes: "This is an administration that seems to thrill at high energy prices. It is even gutting federal programs that promote energy efficiency by a devastating 30%." He concludes: "...for the Bush administration, it's payback time on every front for his greedy legions." (*Los Angeles Times*, 3/27/01) The *Wall Street Journal* writes: "Of all the business interests that back Mr. Bush, oil companies have the clearest ties and strongest personal meaning to the new president. He is a former oil man who revels in his attachment to Texas, and his best friends are oil men, too. Promoting the industry is an instinctive impulse for the president..." (*Wall Street Journal*, 3/6/01)

According to the Center for Responsive Politics, Bush was by far the top recipient of money from the oil and gas industry receiving \$3.2 million (\$1.8 million in campaign contributions plus inaugural and other contributions) of the \$27 million it gave to Republicans in the 2000 election cycle. Additionally, 28 of Bush's Fundraising Pioneers, those raising \$100,000 or more, are connected to the energy industry. (*New York Times*, 6/23/00) Enron has long been one of Bush's biggest corporate supporters and now Enron's Chief Executive has been appointed to the Bush Energy Advisory Team. The *San Francisco Chronicle* reports: "(People) have noted the money connection between Bush, a former oil industry executive, and the vast Texas energy industry. Enron's Kenneth Lay, who boasts he can get Bush on the phone whenever he wants, raised more than \$400,000 for the GOP and the Bush campaign." (*San Francisco Chronicle*) Many other members of the Bush Energy Advisory Team are also big-time campaign contributors from the energy industry. Finally, a pro-business, pro-drilling coalition is pumping \$4 million into an advertising campaign designed to generate support for opening the Arctic Refuge to oil drilling. (*Wall Street Journal*, 3/19/01) All you have to do is follow the money trail to understand why Bush wants to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

II. FAILS IN PLEDGE TO LEAVE NO CHILD BEHIND

As has been seen above, the only focus of the first 100 days of the Bush Presidency has been enacting a \$2 trillion-plus tax cut, targeted mostly on the wealthy. As a result, President Bush has failed to live up to the campaign promise he perhaps repeated the most on the campaign trail – that he would leave no child behind.

The budget that President Bush has submitted breaks that promise and leaves many children behind. This portion of the Special Report shows how President Bush has left millions of American children behind in the following ten areas: tax cuts; child care/early learning; Head Start; education; health care; nutrition; social services; Digital Divide; juvenile justice; and welfare.

Some of the more outrageous cuts include the following:

- ! Bush's budget cuts \$60 million from the Boys and Girls Clubs of America. The announcement of this cut came on the heels of a visit by Bush to a Boys and Girls Club in Wilmington, DE, to tout his tax cut. (*Washington Post*, 4/12/01)
- ! Bush's budget cuts federal funding for libraries by \$39 million even though the First Lady's recently launched her National Library Campaign. (*Dallas Morning News*, 4/13/01; *Sunday Gazette Mail*, 4/15/01)
- ! Bush's budget cuts \$35 Million from Children's Hospitals Doctors Training Program, after Bush visited a children's hospital in Atlanta which received funding under the program. (*New York Times*, 3/23/01, 4/4/01; *Cox News Service*, 3/28/01; *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, 3/2/01; *Washington Post*, 4/1/01, 4/4/01, 4/10/01; AP, 4/3/01)

Tax Cuts

The more than \$2 trillion in tax cuts that the Bush budget spends the surplus on leaves many working families behind, despite claims that the tax cut would go to all taxpayers. The reality is that the tax cut will benefit the wealthy while leaving many families with children behind. Specifically, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 12.2 million low- and moderate-income families with children – 31.5% of all families – would get NO tax cut under the Bush plan. (Some 80% of these families have at least one family member in the workforce.) Further, an estimated 24 million children – or 33.5% of all children – live in families that would receive NO tax reduction if the Bush plan were enacted. Of this total, 10.1 million are white, 6.1 million are black, and 6.5 million are Hispanic.

Child Care/Early Learning

Child Care. Despite the importance of child care, the Bush budget reduces resources for existing Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) projects by \$200 million because — although it increases CCDBG by \$200 million – it creates a new \$400 million set-aside for after-school programs. As a result, fewer young, low-income children would

receive child care, making it more difficult for their parents to work. The Bush budget proposes these cuts even though only 12% of eligible children are currently served by the Child Care and Development Block Grant. We should not take funds from infant and toddler child care to shift to older child care (in after-school programs) when the need in both areas is so great. It makes no sense to “rob Peter to pay Paul” when current funding in both areas falls so short of the need.

Early Learning Opportunities Program. The Bush budget eliminates all funding for the Early Learning Opportunities program – a bipartisan initiative enacted last year to provide resources to communities for more responsive early childhood systems, including parent education and family support services. Funding for the program in FY 2001 is \$20 million. This initiative has been particularly championed by Republican Senator Ted Stevens. Indeed, when President Clinton signed the legislation in December, Senator Stevens stated, “I expect our new first lady, Laura Bush, to be a champion of early childhood education.” And yet now President Bush has proposed eliminating the program!

Head Start

Unfortunately, despite promises to leave no child behind, the Bush budget abandons the plan to ensure that one million children receive Head Start by FY 2002. Under the Bush Administration’s own estimates, the Head Start program will fall 84,000 students short of that goal in FY 2002. Funding for Head Start is \$6.2 billion in FY 2001. The Bush budget provides \$6.325 billion for Head Start for FY 2002. But this additional \$125 million is insufficient to increase existing Head Start programs for inflation. Indeed, once various set-asides in the Head Start Act are taken into consideration (i.e. quality funds, early Head Start funding, etc.), let alone inflation adjustments, Head Start will serve fewer children next year. Specifically, Children’s Defense Fund estimates that the President’s budget request, if enacted, would mean that Head Start would serve at least 2,500 fewer children next year.

Education

The Bush Budget Starves Key Education Initiatives. President Bush provides only a \$2.4 billion increase for education but proposes to spend nearly \$2 billion of that on reading and Pell grants. He leaves only \$400 million for all other education programs—including all other elementary, secondary, and higher education programs, special education, and vocational education—less than the Education Department needs just to keep up with inflation. His budget:

- ! Eliminates the Class-Size Reduction Initiative/Underfunds the Commitment to More & Better Teachers.** The Bush budget eliminates the Class Size Reduction Initiative by consolidating class size reduction and Eisenhower professional development. The Bush budget also fails to provide enough funding to continue reducing class size and expand professional development and training for teachers. The Bush budget provides far less than Democrats have proposed to improve teacher training and continue on the path to put 100,000 quality teachers in the classroom. This year, there are 37,000 teachers funded through the class size reduction program providing smaller classes to 2 million children. Under the Bush budget, many of these teachers may have to be let go.

- ! **Zeros Out School Modernization.** Instead of moving forward toward modern and safe schools, the Bush budget eliminates the School Renovation Program next year, and retroactively redirects the \$1.2 billion already appropriated for this year to technology and special education. As many as 1,000 schools in disrepair will not be renovated.
- ! **Breaks Promise on Increase in Pell Grants.** The budget request is \$1.5 billion short of President Bush's campaign proposal to provide \$5,100 Pell Grants to low-income freshmen. President Bush proposed a \$1 billion increase for the Pell program – but well over \$500 million is needed just to maintain the maximum Pell Grant at \$3,750. As a result, the maximum Pell Grant would increase by only \$100 under the Bush budget – from \$3,750 to \$3,850.
- ! **Freezes Funding for After-School Programs.** The Bush budget freezes funding for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers after-school program at the FY 2001 level – \$846 million – despite the enormous need for expanded after-school programs. Part of the importance of these after-school programs is that they can provide low-achieving students the extra help they need to meet challenging academic standards. These programs are also key to keeping kids off the streets after school, and preventing youth crime, and alcohol and drug use.
- ! **Freezes Funding for Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program.** The Bush budget also freezes funding for the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program at the FY 2001 level – \$644 million – despite the enormous need for expanded Safe and Drug-Free Schools programs across the country. The Safe and Drug-Free Schools program is a vitally important program – the primary federal program providing resources to school districts across the country to combat violence and drug use in the nation's schools.

Health Care

Medicaid & S-CHIP. Instead of building on Medicaid and S-CHIP coverage for children, the Bush budget proposes the largest single cutback in mandatory programs from changes in the Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance Program. The budget states "[t]he Administration will also focus over the next few months on Medicaid and S-CHIP and recommend reforms that will improve the way these programs provide health coverage to the poor and near-poor." The Administration assumes that these reforms will save \$17 billion over the next 10 years. Specifically, the Bush budget cuts Medicaid spending by \$606 million in 2002 relative to current law. Over five years (2002-2006), Medicaid spending is \$6.9 billion lower than it would be otherwise, and \$17.4 billion lower over 10 years (2002-2011). Further, the budget alludes to replacing Medicaid and S-CHIP with private health insurance through health care tax credits and other unspecified proposals. However, it is not at all clear that the level of tax credits being discussed would be sufficient to ensure that families with children could purchase health insurance policies with adequate coverage.

Maternal and Child Health Block Grant. Despite its importance, the Bush budget cuts the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Block Grant below this year's level. Specifically, for FY 2002, the Bush budget funds the MCH block grant at \$709 million – a cut of \$5 million

below a freeze at the FY 2001 enacted level. The MCH block grant program gives grants to states to develop federal/state systems of services for women before, during and after pregnancy and childbirth; and to reduce infant mortality and provide access to care.

Healthy Start. Despite its importance, the Bush budget freezes Healthy Start at the FY 2001 level of \$90 million for FY 2002. The FY 2001 level was also freeze-level funded so the actual purchasing power of this program is reduced for a second year in a row under the Bush budget. The Healthy Start program supports programs to reduce low birth weight, inadequate prenatal care, and other factors contributing to infant mortality, in targeted high-risk communities.

Training Doctors in Children's Hospitals. The Bush budget cuts grants to train doctors at children's hospitals by \$35 million – or by 14.9% – below the FY 2001 enacted level. Funding drops from \$235 million in FY 2001 to \$200 million in FY 2002. These funds are currently used by children's teaching hospitals to offset the higher costs of providing advanced training to pediatricians.

Nutrition

WIC. The Bush budget provides \$4.137 billion for the highly-acclaimed Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) in FY 2002. This program provides vital nutrition assistance to low-income women, infants and children. While the Bush Administration claims this is an increase of \$94 million, when appropriate adjustments are made, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, the actual increase in the WIC operating level that Bush is requesting is only \$49 million – or 1.2% – which is less than is needed to cover inflation. (Because of substantial sums of unspent funds from 2000 that could be used in 2001, Congress set the appropriation level for 2001 lower than would otherwise have been the case.) Indeed, the following is the Center's conclusion regarding the Bush budget request for WIC for FY 2002: "For the first time in a number of years, an Administration has proposed a budget that provides insufficient funds to serve all eligible low-income women, infants and children who seek WIC nutrition benefits. In fact, the Bush budget would not provide adequate funds to serve next year the number of women, infants and children on WIC today, despite the fact that the number of women, infants and children who are eligible for and in need of WIC is expected to rise in the coming year as a result of higher unemployment."

Social Services

Title XX Social Services Block Grant. The Bush budget provides \$1.7 billion for the Social Services Block Grant (often used by states to serve children and families at risk) – a cut of \$25 million below a freeze at the FY 2001 enacted level – disregarding strong bipartisan congressional support for increasing the Block Grant. The National Governors Association has requested funding of \$2.38 billion for FY 2002 for SSBG, as originally allowed by the 1996 welfare reform legislation. Indeed, the Strengthening Working Families Act recently introduced by a bipartisan group of Senators would set SSBG funding for FY 2002 at this \$2.38 billion level.

Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect. The Bush budget cuts grants to help states investigate and prevent child abuse and neglect by \$16 million – or by 47%. Funding for the program would be reduced from \$34 million in FY 2001 to \$18 million in FY 2002. Furthermore, most other child welfare service programs are frozen at the FY 2001 enacted level.

Digital Divide

One area where leaving no child behind is particularly important is in access to computers and the Internet – the new gateway to education and information. There is clearly a digital divide in which those who are poor or live in rural areas are in danger of being left behind relative to wealthier residents of urban areas. This problem continues to be most significant for black and Hispanic children. While 46% of white households are connected to the Internet, only 23% of black and 23% of Hispanic households have Internet access. Yet, the Bush budget proposes to cut the Commerce Department's Technology Opportunities Program by two-thirds – from \$46 million in FY 2001 to \$16 million in FY 2002. This program provides computers and Internet access to poor and underserved areas. This cut in the Bush budget signals a retreat from efforts to encourage Internet use among minorities, the poor, and people in rural areas.

Juvenile Justice

Within the Justice Department, the Bush budget slashes assistance to state and local law enforcement by \$1 billion (or by 19%) – cutting appropriations from \$5.16 billion in FY 2001 to \$4.19 billion in FY 2002. This drastic cut of \$1 billion includes a cut of \$271 million in COPS grants used for hiring new community police officers – cutting the grants from \$591 million in FY 2001 to \$320 million in FY 2002. The Bush budget is cutting these COPS grants even though, over the last six years, the COPS program has succeeded in making our communities and our young people safer – slashing crime rates all across the country. In addition, this drastic cut of \$1 billion in assistance to state and local law enforcement includes such cuts in programs within the Justice Department's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, including juvenile justice and delinquency prevention grants, gang-free schools and communities grants, mentoring grants, victims of child abuse grants, and drug reduction program grants.

Welfare

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds currently provide cash assistance, child care, and other anti-poverty services to families with children. More than 6 million children – or 9% of all children – live in families receiving TANF. The Bush budget permits states to divert federal TANF funds to offset revenue losses from the Bush proposal to create new state income tax credits for charitable contributions. However, the Bush budget does not provide additional TANF funds to cover spending associated with this initiative. The Bush budget could result in real cuts in TANF funds going to families and their kids.

III. Not Compassionate– Just Really Conservative

Bush promised to be a different kind of Republican – to be a “compassionate conservative.” Instead of being compassionate, Bush is just really conservative. He is catering to the right-wing and the special interests, instead of putting people first.

In that ideological vein, let's take a look at Bush's failure to live up to promises to change the tone of Washington, to be a uniter, not a divider, and to be a reformer with results. It is clear that because Bush has focused on pleasing big corporate interests and the conservative base of the Republican party, he is governing in a way completely contrary to this compassionate image. This section examines his actions, along with the contributors and conservative interests behind them. It begins by looking at the face of the Administration, which show just how conservative and in league with the monied special interest the Bush Administration really is.

A. The Face of the Bush Administration

Bush touts himself as a “compassionate conservative,” but his administration picks show he is an old fashioned right-wing conservative, who is cowering to those who are responsible for him being in office – the conservative right-wing and big corporations who generously financed the Bush campaign. Bush himself has said “personnel is policy.” (*Washington Post*, 3/25/01)

Bush's cabinet selections, as the *News and Observer* noted, have proven that “the Bush administration – from Attorney General John Ashcroft on down – probably has more conservatives in policy-making positions than any presidency in recent memory.” (*News and Observer* (Raleigh, NC, 3/28/01) In fact, this is the nearly universal assessment. Here is a sampling:

“President Bush is quietly building the most conservative administration in modern times, surpassing even Ronald Reagan in the ideological commitment of his appointments, White House officials and prominent conservatives say,” (*Washington Post*, 3/25/01)

President of the conservative Heritage Foundation Edwin J. Feulner discussed how conservative the Bush administration has become and said that it is “more Reaganite than the Reagan administration.” (*New York Times*, 3/19/01)

“... It's a Cabinet that only Jerry Falwell and his ilk could love.” (*Price column, Detroit News*, 1/8/01)

According to Edmonton Sun columnist Pat Harden, “If anyone had suspicions that once elected, George W. Bush would abandon his commitment to ‘compassionate conservatism’ or to being ‘a uniter, not a divider,’ they were quickly confirmed when he named his cabinet nominees. Holding their collective noses, they [GOP right-wingers] backed Dubya, but demanded their pounds of flesh. Bush paid off handsomely, first by picking his string-puller, Dick Cheney, for his running mate, then by nominating social conservatives and Reagan-era hacks for his cabinet.” (*Harden column, Edmonton Sun*, 1/7/01)

Bush's Cabinet "is a conservative 'dream team,' ... For all the talk of inclusion and bipartisanship, President-elect George W. Bush is dancing with the ones who 'brung him'. The communities that rejected Bush at the ballot box have seen their concerns firmly rejected in the new Cabinet." (*Aldape column, Fort Worth Star Telegram, 1/7/01*)

The most prominent and controversial conservative in the cabinet is Attorney General John Ashcroft. Long known as one of the most conservative members of the Republican party, John Ashcroft is completely out of touch with mainstream America. Ashcroft is probably best-known for his staunch opposition to a woman's right to choose. As Missouri's governor, Ashcroft signed one of the most restrictive anti-choice laws in the country, he has voted repeatedly to restrict choice for women, and has said that he would like Roe v. Wade to be overturned. (*UPI, 11/28/82, 8/1/86; Congressional Record, S16799, 11/8/95*) But choice is just the tip of the iceberg. *Time* magazine summed up Ashcroft's record on civil rights and race issues as "horrendous," and said, "Ashcroft has been on the wrong side of every social issue from affirmative action to hate-crimes legislation and women's rights." (*Time, 1/8/01*). "In former Sen. John Ashcroft of Missouri, the new Justice Department will have a committed leader of the Christian right in perhaps the most sensitive of all Cabinet positions." (*David Broder, Washington Post, 1/7/01*)

But, Ashcroft is one among many. For example, Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson has supported a conservative agenda -- pro-life positions, opposing gun safety, supporting cuts in the school lunch programs, and welfare spending. Energy Secretary Spence Abraham supports eliminating the Departments of Commerce, Education, Housing and Urban Development, and Energy, the very department he heads. Further, Bush's preferred choice to head the Labor Department Linda Chavez was so conservative, she actually opposed guaranteed maternity leave for working mothers.

Not only is his cabinet a gift to the right wing, but the Bush Team is also embodies wealthy corporate America's dream. From the President on down, businesses with major issues before the Federal Government are literally at the decisionmaking table making. In a number of cases, these cabinet appointments headed up companies who have been very generous to Bush and the Republican party, and become wealthy from these businesses, which they now will have oversight and policy making authority over. In fact, the *Sunday Telegraph* reported that "the Bush cabinet was the wealthiest in history, averaging \$11 million in personal wealth." (*Sunday Telegraph, 2/4/01*)

As the editor of *Fortune* magazine noted:

"...Bush's government will at least give confidence to business. ...They are especially comforted by his appointments of CEOs to important cabinet posts (the secretaries of Treasury, Defense, and Commerce, as well as the vice presidency)." (*Colvin column, Director, 2/01*)

This is particularly true for the number one business interest in the Bush White House -- big oil and gas. Most prominent, of course, is Vice President Cheney, who was the Former CEO of Halliburton, the world's largest oil field services company. In August, 2000, Cheney received \$20.6 million for his sale of Halliburton stock. Cheney heads the Bush energy task force, which will make decisions that could loom large for companies like Halliburton. But he is not the only one. National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice

served on the board of directors for Chevron, a major U.S. oil company for 10 years. Chevron even named an oil tanker in her honor. During the 1999-2000 Chevron gave GOP candidates and committees \$758,588 -- \$224,038 to Republican Congressional candidates. Another cabinet member with strong ties to the oil and gas industry is Don Evans, Secretary of Commerce has spent 25 years at Tom Brown Inc., a \$1.2 billion Denver-based oil and gas company.

Oil and gas are not the only industries prominently placed at the Bush table. The pharmaceutical industry that opposes Medicare prescription drug coverage is well seated. Office of Management and Budget Director Mitchell Daniels is former senior vice president for Eli Lilly, one of the world's leading pharmaceutical companies. In Mid-January Daniels sold almost \$38 million in Lilly shares. The Center for Responsive Politics said that Daniels' appointment as Budget Director "should make [Eli] Lilly happy." During 1999-2000 Eli Lilly gave \$1,196,220 to the GOP -- \$415,850 to GOP candidates and \$781,370 to GOP committees. (www.crp.org; USA Today, 3/7/01)

It is not just the former CEO's in the Bush Administration who are making Bush's Washington a more friendly place for big business special interest contributors. Bush has nominated Harvard professor John D. Graham to be his regulations czar. According to the *New York Times*, "Dr. Graham, the founder and director of a Harvard center that receives most of its money from industry, has become a pivotal figure in the battles over environmental regulation by arguing a theme that is **pleasing to his donors' ears.**" For example, Dr. Graham was criticizing EPA for concluding that second-hand tobacco smoke is a carcinogen while receiving contributions from Philip Morris. Recently, he advised against a ban on using cellular phones while driving in a study funded by AT&T wireless Communications. According to the ***New York Times***, his nomination as head of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs has "thrilled industry lobbyists". (*New York Times*, 3/25/01)

Further, Bush – in what the *Washington Post* called a "radical shift in the government's oversight of consumer products" – just announced the appointment of Mary Sheila Gall to Head Consumer Product Safety Commission. She will head the CPSC even though she has opposed a federal flammability standard for upholstered furniture and the banning of baby bath seats, and voted against the regulation of baby walkers because any death or injury caused by the use of these products was the fault of the parent and not the product. (*Washington Post*, 4/20/01)

B. Changing the Tone of Washington

The face of the Administration has proven to be meted out through its actions. The Bush Administration instead of changing the tone of Washington, has waged a relentless assault on the environment on behalf of special interest contributors. Specifically, Bush has overturned new arsenic standards in water, reversed his campaign pledge on clean air, suspended new clean-up requirements for mining companies, and threatened to challenge a logging ban on nearly 60 million acres of national forest.

Instead of working in a bipartisan way on behalf of the American people, the Bush

Administration has rammed through anti-worker safety legislation that threatens hundreds of thousands of workers.

Environmental Assaults & Regulatory Rollback

President Bush and his Administration, in less than 100 days, have severely undermined our nation's environmental protections. The rollbacks and flip flops by this Administration on issues like arsenic in drinking water, global warming, mining cleanups and roadless wilderness have been truly breathtaking. President Bush continues to be more interested in rewarding his special interest friends in the energy, utility and chemical industries than in promoting the national interest.

Even Republicans have been taken aback by Bush's anti-environmental rampage.

Rep. Sherwood L. Boehlert (R-N.Y.), a moderate closely allied with environmental groups, cautioned that Bush was "taking a risk" by issuing so many controversial decisions on the environment so early. **(Washington Post, 3/24/01)**

"I guess it was wishful thinking to believe that once he got in office he would help our cause," says Martha Marks, president of Republicans for Environmental Protection, a grassroots group with members in 47 states. "We're disappointed. Very disappointed." **(USA Today, 3/16/01)**

With each of these decisions, it is clear that the Bush Administration is siding with corporate interests who have funded his campaign, rather than siding with the public, which wants clean water, clean air -- and overall a clean environment.

...the gang in power is out to pillage and rape the environment with an abandon not witnessed since the days when strip-mining was in vogue. The principle seems to be that what's good for a company that gave money to the Bush campaign is good for the country. As a Los Angeles Times front-page headline put it: "With Bush, Happy Days Here Again for Business Lobby." **(Robert Scheer Los Angeles Times, 3/27/01)**

President Bush's environmental agenda is driven by special interests, not the public interest, and his actions threaten decades of progress to protect our health and our natural resources." Deb Callahan, League of Conservation Voters, 4/24/01

In order to repay his supporters, Bush once again puts business interests ahead of the interests of the American people. President Bush calls himself a compassionate conservative, but there is nothing compassionate about abandoning important health standards to please campaign contributors.

Bush Overturns Reduction of Arsenic in Drinking Water

Arsenic is a poison – plain and simple. It causes several forms of cancer (including skin, bladder, lung, and prostate) not to mention numerous other permanent health problems

like diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Children are most at-risk. Scientists say there should be no more than 10 parts of arsenic per billion in drinking water. That's also the standard in the European Union and the one adopted by the World Health Organization. But the current outdated standard in America is 50 parts per billion and dates back to 1942.

In January 2001, after decades of studies, public comment, and debate, new rules were issued that would lower the arsenic standard to 10ppb for everyone in America. If implemented, the arsenic standard would have provided additional protection for 13 million Americans against long-term effects of arsenic such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and neurological disorders, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

Now, under pressure from special interests, the Bush administration has revoked that rule restoring the 50ppb standard. EPA Administrator Whitman announced on April 22 that a new rule on arsenic levels in our water would be delayed by nine months so that "sound science" could be employed to arrive at the proper level. "Sound science" already decided this issue, and this is a standard of 10 parts per billion.

The Bush administration's action is an assault on the American people and public health on behalf of the mining and chemical interests and groups like the American Wood Preservers Institute who funded the Bush election. Mining interests gave Republicans more than \$5 million during the 2000 election cycle. And the chemical industry gave even more - nearly \$9 million to Republican candidates. The forestry products industry gave \$7,023,106 to Republicans during the 2000 election cycle. (*Center for Responsive Politics*)

Hard-Rock Mining

Unguarded hard-rock mining threatens America's public lands. That's why the Interior Department spent four years formulating rules governing what miners can and can't do on public property. The result, after much public comment, was a set of environmental rules designed to allow mining to continue where appropriate, but also protect the environment and people living near or down river from mines. The rules also make it tougher for mining companies to avoid financial liability for violations of environmental and public health laws, and include measures to force more hard-rock miners to post cleanup bonds. Now the Bureau of Land Management, under President Bush, has withdrawn those rules and announced a 45-day review period. This leaves America's public lands and American citizens at risk from mining disasters.

The Bush Administration decision is clearly a cave-in to mining interests, who have sued to have the regulations declared invalid. This is yet another environmental retreat at the hands of special interest contributors. Mining interests contributed big dollars to the Bush campaign and Republicans in general. Of all candidates in the 2000 election, George W. Bush received the most money in direct contributions from the mining industry. The mining industry donated and raised at least \$617,142 for Bush. This includes more than \$300,000 for his campaign, \$300,000 for the Bush Inaugural fund, and \$10,000 for the Bush Recount Fund. According to the Center for Responsive Politics, mining interests contributed more than \$6.5 million during the 2000 election cycle. The vast majority, 86 percent, went to Republican candidates. Clearly this is another case of Republican pay-backs to special interests at the expense of America's families and the environment.

Clean Air Regulations – Flip-Flopping on CO2

Bush stunned environmentalists and their congressional allies last week by reversing a campaign promise to require that electric-power plants reduce emissions of carbon dioxide(Newsweek, 3/26/01)

"Corporate America poured a ton of money into Bush's coffers. Now it's payback time inside the Beltway" (Newsweek, 3/26/01)

During his campaign for the presidency, George W. Bush supported the mandatory reduction of four primary air pollutants: sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, mercury, and carbon dioxide. Bush stated this campaign position in a speech and it was enumerated in a campaign policy document issued last September. But then suddenly President Bush reversed himself in a March letter to several Republican senators even though CO2 is the dominant greenhouse gas and the primary contributor to global warming. .

It's a Bush flip-flop that puts not just the United States, but our entire planet at risk and represents yet another windfall to special interests and big contributors to the Republican party. The Bush CO2 flip-flop rewards power plant operators, the oil and gas industry, and some utilities - big business interests that contributed heavily to the Bush campaign and Republicans in general. The oil, mining, electric utility and railroad industries donated and raised at least \$1,950,568 for Bush overall. This includes \$593,068 in contributions to the Bush Campaign, more than \$1.3 million for the Bush Inaugural Committee, and \$25,000 for the Bush recount fund. Of all candidates in the 2000 election cycle, George W. Bush received the most money in direct contributions from the electric utility and mining industries. [www.opensecrets.org]

According to Newsweek, the Bush announcement capped two weeks of ferocious lobbying by energy interests, mainly big utilities – in the person of Thomas Kuhn, Bush's Yale classmate and current chief of the Edison Electric Institute, the lobbying arm of the electric-utility industry. "Sources tell NEWSWEEK that Kuhn called senior White House aides to urge that Bush back away from the emissions cap." Newsweek reports that Kuhn wrote a memo in May of 1999 encouraging electric executives to write \$1000 checks to the Bush campaign and to include on those checks a "tracking code" devised to "insure that our industry is credited" for its contributions. Newsweek states that "Kuhn's efforts appear to have paid off, big time. (Newsweek, 3/26/01)

Bush was not the only beneficiary of the anti-CO2 money. Overall the oil, mining, electric utility and railroad industries have given Republicans at least \$18.1 million in the last 2 years, \$36.8 million over the last 4 years.

Kyoto Protocol

After years of hard work and tough negotiations, President Bush suddenly announced the U.S. will completely abandon the Kyoto treaty on climate change. This represents Bush's second broken campaign promise. The Kyoto treaty was first negotiated in 1997 by more

than a hundred developed and developing nations. It calls for the reduction of greenhouse gases, in particular CO₂.

This surprise reversal of U.S. policy provoked anger and frustration from world leaders. Overseas, European leaders used words like “irresponsible,” “arrogant,” and even “sabotage” to describe Bush’s decision. Even they have figured out who Bush is working for. “If one wants to be a world leader, one must know how to look after the entire earth and not only American industry,” said EU Commission President Romano Prodi. (*New York Times*, 4/1/01)

Just like with his CO₂ flip-flop, the president is acting with his big-business friends and supporters in mind. Congress, controlled by the GOP in both Houses, could be encouraged to act with presidential leadership. Some of Bush’s biggest campaign contributors were industries that oppose any CO₂ emission caps and therefore the Kyoto treaty - the oil and gas industry, power plant operators, some utilities, mining companies, and the railroads. Together these groups gave more than \$18 million to Republicans in the 2000 election cycle including nearly \$2 million directly to Bush. Also, the Global Climate Coalition, an industry-backed group that opposes CO₂ reductions, gave \$3.1 million to the Republicans. (*Center for Responsive Politics*)

Bush Administration Fighting Against Forest Protection

President Clinton used his authority to protect 58 million acres of our national forests from future logging, mining, and road building. It was a heroic act designed to preserve America’s wild beauty for generations to come. Most Americans support this road-making ban to protect the land for conservation and public uses, but is opposed especially by the timber industry because it prevents them from going in, building roads, and clear-cutting trees. The Bush administration is poised to reverse this Clinton legacy because it interferes with the plans of their big-business buddies. The logging, mining, oil and gas industries along with some Western states as well as off-road enthusiasts are all fighting the Clinton road-building ban in every way they can: through the courts, campaign contributions, and lobbying. Currently the rules are on hold until May 12th while the Bush administration figures out what to do about them. All indications are Bush will try to overturn the rule to keep his contributors happy. In the meantime a court hearing for one of the lawsuits is scheduled for March 30th in Boise, Idaho.

Once again Bush is opposing the public and siding with his big-time campaign contributors. The forestry and forest products industry gave the Republicans over \$7 million in donations during the 2000 election cycle. According to the Center for Responsive Politics, Bush was the top recipient of money from the forestry and forest products industries, raking in almost \$300,000. In addition, one of Bush’s Pioneers – the cadre of elite fundraisers that collected more than \$100,000 for Bush – is Peter Secchia of Universal Forest Products. The oil and gas industry, another opponent of the road-ban, gave more than \$25 million to Republicans. And mining interests forked over more than \$5.6 million to Republicans. That’s big money and now those special-interests are ready to cash-in on their investment.

Environmental & Energy Budget Cuts

Not only has Bush waged this war against environmental regulations, but the Bush budget contains significant cuts in funding for many of the most crucial programs that protect this nation's environment. When combined with the President's recent rollbacks of important environmental regulations, this budget makes clear that protection of our nation's environment and natural resources is not a priority of this Administration. Following is an overview of some of the numerous deficiencies in President Bush's budget for FY 2002 that relate to key environmental programs and issues.

- ! Cuts Overall EPA Budget By \$500 Million Below FY 2001 Enacted Level** – For FY 2002, the Bush budget provides \$7.3 billion in discretionary appropriations for the Environmental Protection Agency – which is **\$500 million (or 6.4%) below the FY 2001 enacted level**. This funding level is \$800 million – or 9.4% – below the level needed, according to the Congressional Budget Office, to maintain purchasing power at the FY 2001 level. This overall cut in the EPA budget includes cuts in such programs as the EPA enforcement budget, the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, and science and technology programs (see below for details).

- ! Cuts Overall Interior Budget by \$400 Million Below FY 2001 Enacted Level** – For FY 2002, the Bush budget provides \$9.8 billion in discretionary appropriations for the Interior Department – **which is \$400 million (or 3.9%) below the FY 2001 enacted level**. This funding level is \$737 million (or 7.0%) below the level needed, according to the Congressional Budget Office, to maintain purchasing power at the FY 2001 level.

Backtracking on School Lunch Salmonella Rollback

The Bush Administration backtracked on a harmful decision to relax salmonella testing requirements for meat used in the school lunch program. The Bush Administration has proposed ending the food-safety tests that have — very successfully — safeguarded our nation's schoolchildren from food poisoning. Reports indicate that the salmonella testing instituted by the Clinton Administration has been extremely successful – cutting salmonella contamination has dropped by as much as 50 percent. This decision came about after an intense lobbying effort by the meat industry, which has been a big funder for Republican campaigns. The meat packing industry gave \$31,925 to Bush during 1999-2000, and \$255,949 to GOP candidates and committees. [Newsday, 4/6/01] This was a new low in Bush Administration favors for their Big Business buddies. Fortunately, watchdogs quickly shined a light on this plan so that the Bush Administration scurried away from this reckless decision and announced that the testing would continue.

Repeal of Workplace Safety Regulations & Other Anti-Labor Actions

**“Businesses large and small opposed the [ergonomic] rules, and the vote in Congress was widely characterized as a victory for corporate America.”
(Washington Post, 3/12/01)**

“This has been an all-out effort that involves virtually the entire Washington business community.” - Michael Baroody, chief lobbyist for the National Association of Manufacturers, on yesterday's successful GOP effort to kill workplace protections (CongressDaily, 3/7/01)

In month, President Bush signed a partisan and divisive bill to eliminate a workplace health and safety rule issued by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Ten years of exhaustive work on the worker protection rule were completely wiped out by Bush and congressional Republicans — affecting the more than 600,000 workers every year who are injured by repetitive motion and overexertion on the job. In a short period of time, Republicans killed this regulation to deal with the number-one occupational health and safety problem in the American workplace today. These new safety regulations were designed to prevent injuries ranging from carpal-tunnel syndrome to wrenching back injuries, that not only seriously affects workers' health but cost \$45-50 billion every year in health care expenses and costs from days missed from work.

As the press reported it: “Plans for the rollback of pending Clinton administration workplace regulations, intended to prevent repetitive-motion injuries...were masterminded by business lobbyists and the Senate's No. 2 Republican, Don Nickles of Oklahoma. The path was greased with campaign cash and an obscure 1996 law that limited debate -- and, thus, the amount of time labor unions had to marshal their forces. The Senate approved the rollback by a 56-44 vote on March 6; the House followed suit, 223-206, the next day.” (USA Today, 3/20/01)

Bush and congressional Republicans handed them what one lobbyist called “one of the biggest victories we've seen for some time...” (Washington Post, 3/12/01) The repeal was supported by a number of corporations. In fact, the Wall Street Journal reported that “Repealing the ergonomic rules ranks high on the priority lists of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers and the National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors.” (Wall Street Journal, 3/6/01)

Business groups and the business members of these associations that publicly pushed for the rollback donated \$2 million for Bush overall. This includes \$1.4 million in contributions to the Bush Campaign, and \$400,000 for the Bush Inaugural Committee. In addition, two of Bush's Pioneers – hundred thousand dollar fundraisers – were from organizations or companies lobbying to repeal the ergonomic standards. And, Bush's Transition Teams look like a who's who of businesses supporting the repeal of these regulations.

Given that businesses have had unfettered access in the decisionmaking of the Bush Administration as a result of their efforts on behalf of the Republicans in the 2000 election, it is no wonder that the first major law is one that sides with the special interests over the interests of working families.

Other Anti-Labor Actions

On top of the rush to repeal the workplace safety regulations on ergonomics, it appears our new president also has it out for working Americans in other ways. Apparently, President Bush has decided to use federal involvement to tip the scales in favor of business when it comes to labor-management issues. On February 17th Bush signed four new executive orders described by the *Washington Post* as “**designed to curb the power of organized labor.**” (*Washington Post*, 2-17-01) The most egregious of these presidential orders **bans “project agreements”** which require contractors to follow union rules and pay union dues on federal construction projects. The unions promise to ensure a steady supply of labor and not to strike, and the agreements allow nonunion contractors to bid for the work.

The other executive orders: Require federal contractors to post notices alerting workers of their right to a rebate on the portion of union dues used for politics and lobbying; dissolve the National Partnership Council which fostered labor-management cooperation in government; and overturn a rule protecting employees of contractors at federal buildings when the project is awarded to another contractor.

Resorting to Playing Hardball: Changing the Tone

When Bush said he would change the tone of Washington, most people thought he would work in a bipartisan way to make compromises on behalf of the American people in a civil and respectful way. However, instead of changing the tone, Bush has become a key player in the game of partisan hardball that has come to represent the Republican party.

On taxes, ergonomics, and the Patients’ Bill of Rights, Bush has chosen to try to strong-arm his way through Washington, instead of just negotiating with Democrats as he said he would.

Taxes. President Bush traveled to more than a dozen states to drum up support for his tax-cut and budget package, campaigning in the backyards of vulnerable Democratic Senator. “.. He is trying to win Democrats not by offering to make changes to address their concerns, but by applying political pressure. He has spent the last two weeks traveling the country to push his taxcuts, concentrating on states where Democratic senators could face tough reelection fights in 2002.” (*Los Angeles Times*, 3/8/01)

Bush was not the only administration official trying to strong-arm Senators into accepting his huge tax cut for the wealthy. “Top Bush aides also applied pressure. Democrats point

to phone calls by Bush's chief of staff, Andy Card, and budget director Mitch Daniels to reporters and broadcasters in the hometowns of Sen. Ben Nelson, D-Neb., and Jim Jeffords, R-Vt. The calls said the president was disappointed by their resistance. 'This was ham-handed. It was over-the-top lobbying,' says congressional analyst Marshall Wittmann of the conservative Hudson Institute." (*USA Today*, 4/9/01)

Ergonomics – Further, the Bush Administration worked with the Republican congressional leadership to use the new and never-tested Congressional Review Act to overturn a decades worth of rulemaking over the course of several days. The House and Senate with the backing of the White House used a little-known, never-before-used tool to roll back this worker safety rule — the 1996 Congressional Review Act (CRA). Under the Act, the ergonomics rule would be **eliminated**, and OSHA could neither modify nor improve the rule. Instead, OSHA would have to **restart** its review, and couldn't even propose a rule that was similar to the current one. Not surprisingly, the GOP rushed this to the floor without any hearings or discussion, and without notice.

Patients' Bill of Rights – Not only has Bush rejected a bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights, he has used strong arm tactics to sabotage its passage. President Bush and chief strategist Karl Rove convinced GOP Congressman Charlie Norwood (GA), the key Republican cosponsor of the bipartisan bill last year, to withhold support for a patient protection bill which includes the right to sue HMOs. The press reported that "in a display of political hardball, Bush aides persuaded an influential Republican backer of the bill on regulating health maintenance organizations, Rep. Charles Norwood (R-Ga.), to hold off sponsoring it and to stay away from a news conference held by a bipartisan group of lawmakers Tuesday to unveil the legislation." (*Chicago Tribune*, 2/7/01)

Thomas Mann, an expert on Congress at the nonpartisan Brookings Institution think tank, warned "Bush has done more to dispel the era of good feelings by signing onto some very **hardball maneuvers**, signaling he has no intention of making any concessions on policy," Mann said. (*LAT*, 3/8/01)

C. Uniter, Not a Divider

President Bush promised to be a uniter, not a divider. We all thought that meant that he would work in a less partisan way to help bring all people to the table. We thought that meant that he would make efforts to reach out to women and minorities – to be a President for all Americans. But apparently bowing to campaign contributors and his party's right wing, Bush has broken this campaign promise

Instead of working in a bipartisan ways, Bush is playing political hardball to pushing a highly partisan and divisive tax cut. Instead of developing a balanced energy package, he has a task force working in secret that is reportedly going to propose more drilling, and less environmental protection. Instead of uniting Americans on managed care reform, he threatening to veto a bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights. In each of these cases the Bush

Administration has followed their special interest friends down a very partisan and divisive paths that fails America's families.

Instead of reaching out to all Americans, Bush has shown no leadership on making every vote count, or counting all Americans. He has closed or attempted to close each of the White House Offices on Women, Race, and AIDs – those charged with bringing women and minorities to the decisionmaking table. He has brought on the conservative Federalist Society to make judicial appointments, while shunning the American Bar Association that has given professional advise on appointments for the past 50 years. Finally, Bush has proposed budget cuts that disproportionately hurt minority communities. In these cases, Bush is following the right wing that bolstered his campaign during those difficult primaries against John McCain.

Partisan Tax Cuts for His Wealthy Contributors and Special Interests

That Bush is pushing a divisive and huge tax cut for the wealthy that could lead us back to deficit spending or raiding the Medicare or Social Security surplus comes as no surprise.

After all, Bush's campaign for the presidency was funded by the wealthiest of Americans. Two-thirds of Bush's campaign donations came from donors who gave at least \$1,000, according to the Center for Responsive Politics. Academic studies show that 80% of donors of at least \$200 to congressional campaigns have family incomes of \$100,000 or more; nearly half have family incomes of more than \$250,000. Undoubtedly, donors who give at least \$1,000 are concentrated even higher on the income scale. Meanwhile, Bush's roster of 214 "pioneers"-- the volunteer fundraisers who raised at least \$100,000 for his campaign -- is a who's who of corporate executives in the top income brackets. Clearly Bush has written a tax plan to reward the fat cats that funded his campaign.

Not only are wealthy contributors looking for personal tax breaks, but businesses that have filled the campaign coffers of Bush and Republicans across-the-board want to add more than a trillion dollars in corporate tax breaks to Bush's bloated tax cut bill. Indeed, there is a long list of taxcuts that business lobbyists would like to see enacted. Estimates of the tax breaks that corporate interests are looking for range from \$500 billion to an additional \$1.3 trillion or more. (*USA Today*, 1/26/01; *Time*, 2/12/01) These include everything from reducing the corporate income tax rate, to cutting the corporate capital gains tax (estimated to cost \$32 billion over 10 years), to repeal of the corporate alternative minimum tax – which ended the practice of corporations paying no taxes because of massive taxshelters- - which could cost \$220 billion. And these businesses have had a seat at the table, literally.

On April 7, 2001, Bush held a luncheon at the White House with 22 business leaders who contributed more than \$14 million to the GOP during the 2000 election cycle, to discuss Bush's tax cut. (*Wall Street Journal*, 2/8/01) Realizing the early inclusion of these tax breaks would drive up the cost of the Bush tax plan, top Bush Administration officials pressured

these businesses to join together as the "Tax Relief Coalition" (TRC) and to agree to temporarily postpone their tax breaks. In return, these business groups will be allowed to advance their broader non-tax agenda with the support of the Bush administration. Further, these groups expect a second tax bill to carry the business tax breaks after the initial Bush tax plan is enacted.

Indeed, key business groups have indicated that they are supporting President Bush's initial \$1.6 trillion tax cut with the expectation that, once the \$1.6 trillion tax cut is enacted, other tax bills will be enacted containing business tax cuts they are seeking. "We want to see this bill pass and the president to succeed," Baroody said. "There's time enough for a follow-on after we've dealt with first things first." (*AP*, 3/6/01) Business leaders "understand there are going to be a series of tax cuts to come," according to Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform. (*Business Week*, 3/19/01)

These businesses know that Bush will deliver for them as they have been helpful to his electoral cause, making big contributions to his campaign coffers. Specifically, the Tax Relief Coalition ponied up \$173,000 for the Bush campaign and inauguration. For Republican candidates and parties, the coalition gave \$677,611. (www.opensecrets.org; www.tray.com; *Chicago Tribune*, 2/19/01) Further, the Chamber of Commerce, National Association of Manufacturers and National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors all had major grass-roots and advertising campaigns that helped Bush and Republicans in 2000.

Business groups are strongly embracing the Bush tax cut. In fact, they are spending millions running ads for the Bush tax cuts. The Issues Management Center launched a recent television ad campaign to support President Bush's tax cut, featuring President Kennedy's voice supporting a 1962 tax cut. A conservative group called Club for Growth announced a plan to launch a \$1 million television campaign to garner support for the tax cut package.

Patients' Bill of Rights

Instead of bringing people together on a bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights, President Bush has sided with the HMOs and health insurance industry. Instead of being the uniter that he promised, Bush has joined the Republican leadership and special interest contributors in erecting new obstacles to passage of important patient protections to ensure that doctors and not insurance bureaucrats make medical decisions.

In February, the Bipartisan Patient Protection Act was introduced by a bipartisan coalition including Senators McCain & Kennedy, House Reps. Ganske & Dingell, & many other Republicans and Democrats. The bill provides all insured patients with a variety of protections including [guaranteed access to needed health care specialists](#), [access to emergency room services](#), [assurance that doctors and patients can openly discuss treatment options](#), and [an enforcement mechanism that gives genuine recourse to patients who have been harmed as a result of a health plan's actions](#).

Instead of embracing this bipartisan compromise several years in the making, last month President Bush promised to veto this important measure. He stated "I want to sign a patients' bill of rights this year, but I will not sign a bad one and **cannot sign any one that is now before Congress.**" (*Speech, 3/21/01*) Bush instead has outlined a weakened proposal for a Patients' Bill of Rights, which limits a patient's ability to enforce these critical rights which was applauded by the Health Benefits Coalition (*Health Benefits Coalition release, 2/7/01*) – a group of health insurance companies and some of Washington's biggest trade associations.

"George W. Bush pledged on the campaign trail to bring Democrats and Republicans together on behalf of a patients' bill of rights. But his failure now to back the sensible bipartisan bill being sponsored by John McCain, John Edwards and others in Congress calls into question the sincerity of his pledge." (*New York Times, 2/9/01*)

"Mr. Bush is addressing an issue critical to some of his biggest financial supporters, including major employers groups, insurers, H.M.O.'s and the Business Roundtable, all of whom have been lobbying heavily to make sure that patients' legislation is not too costly. They were heartened by Mr. Bush's commitment to vetoing the leading bill now in Congress." (*New York Times, 3/22/01*)

The fact the Bush is failing to live up to his campaign pledge just shows the power of the special interests in this White House. Insurance companies and other opponents of Patients' Bill of Rights legislation **gave at least \$2.7 million to Bush's presidential campaign and transition.** Specifically, \$1,626,093 was given by the insurance industry to the Bush campaign according to the Center for Responsive Politics. Another \$1,145,000 was given by the insurance industry to the inaugural fund. (www.opensecrets.org) According to Texans for Public Justice, a non-partisan watchdog group, seven Bush Pioneers have ties to the health insurance industry, which opposes a Patients' Bill of Rights. Insurance companies and other opponents of Patients' Bill of Rights Legislation **gave at least \$41.7 million to other Republican campaigns.** (*Wall Street Journal, 3/15/00*)

Given the money HMO's and the insurance industry have invested, it is no wonder that Bush is choosing the partisan path. Apparently, campaign dollars speak louder than campaign pledges.

Bush Fails to Lead on Making Every Vote Count & Counting Each Voter

After the 2000 election, President Bush had a unique opportunity to be a uniter, and not a divider as he promised in the campaign. He could have shown leadership on repairing the election system, which the 2000 election demonstrated had widespread problems that appear to disproportionately affect voting in poor and minority communities. Bush, instead

of working to improve our election system to make sure that every vote is counted and that voters are not improperly denied the right to cast their votes on election day, Bush has erected obstacles to progress on this important issue that could bring all Americans to the table.

First, Bush almost single-handedly killed Speaker Hastert's failed efforts to establish a select committee on election reform in the House of Representative. According to *Roll Call*, "President Bush ...raised 'serious reservations' about the formation of the panel, according to GOP sources.... House Republican aides say Bush did express concerns that it could be used as a forum by Democrats to attack the credibility of his nascent administration." (*Roll Call*, 2/1/01) Apparently, after Bush faced sharp questions from House Democrats on his commitment to electoral reform when he attended their retreat in Pennsylvania, Bush backed off of his objection. (*Roll Call*, 2/8/01)

Then, more importantly, Bush has failed to put his money where his mouth is. "Although President Bush called for repairing the tattered election system that put him in the White House, his administration has rejected its first formal opportunity to help fix the problems." (*USA Today*, 3/21/01) Specifically, the Bush Administration refused a budget request from the Federal Elections Committee (FEC) for \$5.5 million over two years for its Office of Election Administration, the only federal office with the power to address how elections are run. "The budget increase would have covered doubling the size of the election administration office, undertaking a 'comprehensive census' of voting equipment used across the country, and surveying local election administrators to develop a manual of the best practices in running elections." (*USA Today*, 3/21/01) This was after spokesman Ari Fleischer said, "The president wants to make certain that one of the focuses of attention this year is electoral reform."

The entire country is clamoring for real election reform. But Bush apparently, instead of following the lead of the American people, is following the lead of conservative Republicans who believe they need to continue the flawed election system in order to maintain Republican control of the government. In fact, the Republican conservative mantra on this issue is "get over it." Minorities and poor Americans who have been denied access to the ballot box under the current system are disappointed that Bush sided with a narrow band of conservatives, instead of working for all Americans to restore confidence in our democracy.

Not only is Bush apparently not interested in counting every vote in elections, he has also decided that for redistricting, we do not need to count every vote. On the census, another key issue for minorities in this country, the Bush Administration released census numbers that missed more than 3 million American, mostly minorities, children and rural folks for purposes of congressional redistricting. Specifically, on March 6, the Bush Administration chose not to correct the undercount of more than 3 million Americans in the 2000 Census. That means children, minority communities, and rural and urban areas will lose out on deserved representation because of the decision of the Bush Administration. He rejected yet another opportunity to be a uniter, not a divider.

This was a cave in to the right-wing Republicans who are willing to disenfranchise millions of Americans to preserve GOP political power, at the urging of GOP Congressional leaders who fear that counting all Americans will hurt them politically. "Why? As the *Journal* reported, 'Some GOP leaders believe that statistically adjusted numbers would help Democrats in as many as 12 House races in 2002 because there is evidence that millions of minorities may have been missed.' (*Wall Street Journal*, 2/14/01)

Someone who ran for President pledging to unite Americans should not start off his term by disenfranchising millions of minorities, children and the rural and urban poor. This decision by the Bush Administration further highlights that Bush does not believe that every person, like every vote, should be counted.

These events -- the undervote and the undercount -- suggest that Mr. Bush could have a difficult time proving he deserves more support from minority Americans. African-Americans must now accept a census that will reduce their ability to win help from the federal government and, possibly, to elect African-Americans to Congress .. The nation's motto is "E pluribus unum": out of many, one. This administration is headed for quite a different mantra: "Don't count -the votes. Don't count the people." (*The Baltimore Sun*, 3/19/01)

Bush's Anti-Choice Agenda

From day one, Bush has been working to pay back the pro-life forces that helped put him in office. He has catered to them by: reinstating the Mexico City language banning international family planning funding, appointing staunchly pro-life Administration officials, proposing to drop a requirement that federal health insurance programs offer contraceptive coverage, and considering challenges to approval of RU-486 and stem cell research. While Bush talked little about this pro-life agenda on the campaign trail,

[Bush] gives every indication of being the most militant foe of abortion ever to occupy the White House, including Ronald Reagan.... (*Walter Shapiro, USA Today*, 1/31/01)

On his first working day in office, Bush's very first policy was to ban funding for overseas groups offering abortion counseling. Bush rushed to reinstitute a policy prohibiting foreign organizations who even talk about abortion - including in countries where abortion is legal - from receiving U.S. population aid money, no matter who pays for the services. More than just restricting access to abortion, this order eliminates what little access many women have to even basic contraception, family planning and non-reproductive health care. At issue is about \$425 million used by overseas organizations in developing countries to promote family planning, nutrition and counseling. On March 28, Bush signed a special memo to ensure that pro-choice Senators could not use a 1996 law to overturn federal regulations.

As Judy Mann described it, “In a stunning display of political chutzpah, he started his first day in office by reinstating the global gag rule that cuts off international family planning funds to groups even mentioning abortion. That's likely to lead to more unintended pregnancies and more deaths due to illegal abortions. He shed the compassionate part of his conservatism at that moment. (*Washington Post*, 4/11/01)

The Pennsylvania, *Intelligencer Journal* said, “As one of his first acts as president, **Bush bowed to the right wing of the party** by issuing a memorandum banning federal funds for international family planning groups that offer abortion services.” (*Intelligencer Journal*, 1/30/01)

Second, Bush has appointed staunchly anti-choice officials in top positions, including Tommy Thompson as Secretary of Health and Human Services and John Ashcroft as Attorney General. Throughout his career, Ashcroft has supported a pro-life agenda: he has worked to restrict a woman's right to choose, stated that if given the opportunity to pass a single law, he would “ban every abortion.” In his address to the National Right to Life Committee said, “The Roe decision is simply a miserable failure.” And co-sponsored a constitutional amendment outlawing abortions. Governor of Wisconsin, Tommy Thompson has also displayed a pro-life agenda: he supported the Wisconsin attorney general's attempt to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, he received an “F” from NARAL in 2000, signed a mandatory counseling and 24-hour waiting period law for abortions and opposed “buffer zones” at abortion clinics.

Third, Bush proposed dropping a requirement that all health insurance programs for federal employees cover a broad range of birth control. “It is just one paragraph of fine print in the 1,296-page budget appendix, but it would end required coverage for 1.2 million female employees and their dependents who are served by the federal employees health benefits plan (FEHBP).” [*Washington Post*, 4/12/01]

Finally, in a related priority for the ant-choice groups, *The Ledger* reported: “**Bush** has also indicated that he will reconsider the Clinton administration's approval last year of RU-486, the ‘abortion pill’ that has the potential to make the abortion decision a private matter to be decided between a woman and her personal physician. The new president also has signaled that his administration may put the skids on federal funding for potentially life-saving research that uses stem cells from discarded human embryos.” [*The Ledger* 1/26/01]

These anti-choice actions are a payback to the religious right/pro-life forces that were instrumental to the election of George Bush. In a tough primary battle against John McCain, the National Right to Life Committee released a press statement that said, “We applaud Governor Bush for his courageous and consistent pro-life stand. The move is unusual; the nation's most powerful antiabortion group has never endorsed a candidate in the midst of a primary contest.” (*National Right to Life release*, 2/9/00; *Boston Globe*, 2/9/00) Not only did they endorse Bush, but these pro-life groups also funded anti-McCain issue ads during the primaries. During the Republican primaries, Citizens for Life, National Right

to Life and South Carolina Citizens for Life ran seven advertisements in New Hampshire and South Carolina that targeted John McCain's pro-choice stance. At least \$40,000 was spent on the buys. (www.nationaljournal.com)

Bush Threatens White House Minority Offices

Not only has Bush been divisive in his stand on choice issues, he has also closed or tried to close White House offices of concern to women and minorities. Even though, Bush said he wanted to be the President for all Americans, he has tried to eliminate the White House Offices that bring women and minority issues to prominence. Specifically in the first 100 days, the Bush Administration has closed or tried to close the following White House Offices:

- ! **Office on the President's Initiative for One America** – The Bush Administration closed the White House Office of One America, which was created to focus on race. Instead, these issues are to be handled by a less formal "Working Group".

- ! **Office of National AIDS Policy** -- The White House Chief of Staff announced that the White House Office of National AIDS Policy would be closed, but the next day the White House scramble to back track on this announcement. Even though, the Bush Administration said they would not close the office, according to the Washington Post, "two months into the Bush administration, the only thing left of the White House Office of National AIDS Policy is a Web site directing callers to an empty office with a telephone no one answers." (Washington Post, 3/31/01)

- ! **Office of Women** – Bush quietly closed the White House Office for Women's Initiatives and Outreach, an office that had previously served as a liaison to outside organizations concerning issues affecting women. Like the Administration's earlier decisions to close White House Race Initiative and AIDS Policy offices, Bush's decision slams the door in the face of women and illustrates his lack of concern for policies that affect them. Without the office, women's advocates lose a crucial voice on behalf of women's issues within the White House. The National Organization for Women called the decision "really foolish and high-handed," and NOW President Patricia Ireland said "If [Bush] doesn't want there to be polarization, wants to get out of gridlock and head-knocking, this is a strange way to go about it."

Clearly, rather than working to unite all Americans, the Bush Administration has actually tried to eliminate current efforts to give all Americans a seat at the table. The Bush Administration has closed the policy shops that give women's issue and issues of race adequate consideration.

Bowing to Conservatives on Judicial Appointments & Rejecting Minority Appointments

The Bush Administration has in effect put the conservative right-wing in charge of the federal judiciary. "[M]embers of the [Federalist] society -- including Larry D. Thompson, the deputy attorney general -- are playing a central role in a 15-member special White House-Justice Department committee picking candidates to fill openings in the federal district and appeals courts. (*Washington Post*, 4/18/01) The Federalist Society is a conservative right wing organization, which according to American University law professor Jamin Raskin has a "political agenda to completely undo the landmark civil rights and civil liberties decisions of the last half of the 20th century." (*Washington Post*, 4/18/01)

On March 22, 2001, President Bush, handed the Federalist Society what the *Washington Post* called a major victory, when he decided to discontinue a half-century tradition in which presidents have relied on the American Bar Association for professional advice on and evaluations of potential candidates for federal judgeships. This process was started by Eisenhower to emphasize qualifications over political connections.

The decision also seems wildly at odds with Mr. Bush's campaign pledge to avoid ideological litmus tests in the appointment of judges. Finally, it could well backfire by making judicial confirmation battles more politicized than they would be without the A.B.A.'s professional seal of approval. (*New York Times*, 3/23/01)

Mr. Bush's removal of the A.B.A. from the screening process is another signal that he appears willing to grant the most conservative elements within his party, led by Attorney General John Ashcroft, control over judicial matters. Right-wing Republicans have long made the selection of conservative judges one of their chief objectives. (*New York Times*, 3/23/01)

On the same day Bush weakened the power of the American Bar Association's influence on judicial appointments, President Bush rescinded 10 nominees for judicial judgeships submitted by the Clinton Administration, the majority of which were minorities and women. (*AP*, 3/20/01) One of the most controversial was the President's decision to withdraw the nomination of Roger Gregory, who would have been the first African American to serve on the U.S. 4th Circuit Court of Appeals, which has the most minorities in the nation. This clearly was a bow to the right-wing given that both of Virginia's Republican senators approved his appointment on a permanent basis. According to the *Nation*, "Bush further heartened his right-wing supporters by blocking Clinton nominees for the bench like Roger Gregory, who had been given an interim appointment to the Fourth Circuit. (He's the first African-American to enter Jesse Helms's segregated preserve.)" Further, Bush has refused to renominate African-American Justice Ronnie White to federal bench.

While George W. Bush did his best to make himself sound like uniter, and not a divider

throughout the campaign, he is well on his way to showing the true depth of his conservatism with his judicial nomination.

According to *Business Week*, judicial nominations are "critically important to many conservatives who rallied behind Bush when he was fighting for the GOP nomination. And now it's payback time. ...Despite the centrist tenor of Bush's candidacy, the ideology of many of his nominees is expected to be well to the right of most Americans. Indeed, the President's judicial selection committee is dominated by committed conservatives... Most of Bush's nominees are expected to be conservative on social issues such as abortion and school vouchers. They are also likely to be hostile to regulation, skeptical of antitrust regulation, apt to find constitutional objections to environmental and land-use laws - and generally more pro-business than Clinton's nominees." (*Business Week*, 4/23/01)

Unfortunately, the conservative tenor of Bush's judges will have a real effect on the American people. "If Bush's Federalists succeed, the result will be a rollback in federal health, workplace and environmental rules. The Supreme Court will tilt farther in the direction of Justice Antonin Scalia." (*Knight Ridder*, 3/31/01)

Budget Cuts That Are Divisive

While talking about being a uniter, not a divider, the Bush budget cuts many programs that will leave black and Hispanic Americans behind.

Civil Rights Enforcement --The Bush budget decreases funding for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission by \$9 million below the level needed to maintain current services. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is the key agency in the federal government to fight employment discrimination based on race, ethnicity or gender. Further, the Bush budget cuts fair housing activities.

Legal Services For All -- Further, even though the Legal Services Corporation provides critical legal services to the African American and Hispanic communities, the Bush budget cuts the Legal Services Corporation by \$8 million from current services. The Legal Services Corporation is the key mechanism to provide legal services to low-income Americans on issues ranging from domestic violence, child custody, evictions, access to health care, bankruptcy, unemployment and disability claims. In 1999, Legal Services Corporation recipients closed more than 1 million civil legal cases and dealt with many other issues faced by millions of low-income Americans.

Closing the Digital Divide -- While Blacks and Hispanics have made progress in getting computers and getting hooked to the internet, the digital divide -- with whites enjoying far

greater access to such technology than blacks and Hispanics -- continues to widen. And -yet, the Bush administration is proposing to slash government programs providing computers and internet access to poor and underserved areas. Specifically, the Bush budget would slash two-thirds from efforts to bridge the so-called digital divide by providing computers and Internet access to poor and underserved areas. The program would be cut to \$16 million from \$46 million.

Distressed Communities – Not only does the President’s budget propose to cut Small Business programs, it also proposes the following cuts in programs to stimulate investment and economic growth in distressed communities, as follows. President Bush’s Budget eliminates the \$45 million New Markets Venture Capital Program created last year to provide much needed venture capital to stimulate investment and new businesses in economically depressed areas; cuts \$35 million to Empowerment Zones funding, which give distressed communities funding for initiatives to stimulate job creation, improve neighborhood development, and improve community safety; and slashes funding for Community Development Financial Institutions fund, which aims to aid investment in economically distressed areas by providing financial and technical aid to encourage banks and thrifts to expand services in distressed areas, by 43% as compared to the 2001 constant purchasing power level.

C. Not “A Reformer With Results”

In addition to calling himself “a compassionate conservative” and “a uniter, not a divider” during the campaign, Bush also called himself “a reformer with results.” This section will show that – as with “compassionate conservative” and “uniter, not a divider” – President Bush, unfortunately, has failed to live up to this campaign promise.

Not A Reformer: On Key Issues, Bush Is Working to Block Reform – Rather Than Promote Reform!!

First, on issue after issue, instead of being a reformer, President Bush has been opposed to reform. For example, as will be seen below, he has been opposed to real reform on the following three key issues:

- ! Campaign Finance Reform;
- ! Election Reform; and
- ! Managed Care Reform.

Campaign Finance Reform

On the key issue of campaign finance reform, President Bush has shown himself to be an opponent of real reform – rather than an advocate.

In both the 105th Congress and the 106th Congress, Democrats and moderate Republicans were successful in passing real campaign finance reform in the House (the “McCain-Feingold/Shays-Meehan” bill) – by a vote of 252 to 179 on August 6, 1998 and by a vote of 252 to 177 on September 14, 1999 – both times over the fierce opposition of the House GOP leadership. And yet, both in 1998 and 1999, the Senate GOP leadership was successful in killing the bill through a filibuster.

This year, the champions of real campaign finance reform in the Senate – Sens. John McCain (R-AZ) and Russ Feingold (D-WI) – have indicated that their top priority is finally getting a reform bill enacted. Through perseverance, they were able to win an agreement from Senate Majority Leader Lott to have campaign reform on the Senate floor throughout the two-week period of March 19-April 2. On April 2nd, the Senate passed a modified version of McCain-Feingold by a vote of 59 (47 Democrats and 12 Republicans) to 41 (3 Democrats and 38 Republicans).

And yet throughout this process this Spring, President Bush has failed to be a force for reform. Indeed, through his actions, President Bush has worked to undermine real reform – rather than foster it. For example, on March 15, President Bush issued a set of weak “principles” on campaign “reform” – which on issue after issue were sharply divergent from the McCain-Feingold bill. As a New York Times editorial (3/16/01) pointed out:

“Mr. Bush’s Reform Subterfuge”

“Yesterday President Bush issued a set of absurdly weak ‘principles’ to govern changes in the fundraising laws that would do virtually nothing to stem the flow of money. ... With these steps, Mr. Bush would preserve the unbridled fundraising that has corrupted American politics. Mr. Bush’s actions are all the more disappointing because of his oft-repeated campaign pledge to restore ‘honor and integrity’ to Washington ... The ‘principles’ on campaign reform from Mr. Bush were a tired repetition of several unacceptable proposals, including an anti-labor provision requiring union members to approve the expenditure of their dues for political purposes.”

Similarly, following is the reaction of Fred Wertheimer of Democracy 21, a group in favor of limiting money in politics, to the Bush “principles” announced on March 15:

“This is not a proposal to reform the campaign system. It’s a proposal designed to defeat the McCain-Feingold soft money ban legislation.”

Hence, so far this year, President Bush's contribution to the campaign finance reform debate has been to set things back – rather than to move things forward.

Election Reform

Another key issue where President Bush has failed to be a reformer is the critically-important issue of election reform. The 2000 presidential election drew the attention of the American public to the critically-important need to modernize America's election system and better ensure that ballots across the country are accurately counted. Numerous bills have been introduced so far this session that would help states and localities modernize their voting equipment and better ensure the integrity of our election system. As was noted earlier the Bush Administration has failed to move on this key issue.

Managed Care Reform

Also, as has been seen up above in the section entitled "Not A Uniter, Just A Divider," a third key issue where President Bush is blocking real reform – instead of promoting real reform – is the issue of Managed Care Reform.

On this issue, President Bush has had a clear choice:

- ! He could be on the side of the coalition of over 200 organizations, including such groups as those representing doctors, nurses, and other health care providers; patient advocacy groups; and consumer groups; that have endorsed a real Patients' Bill of Rights – (the McCain-Kennedy bill in the Senate, S. 283, and the Ganske-Dingell bill in the House, H.R. 526) or
- ! He could be on the side of the HMO industry and the health insurance industry, which are the key opponents of the McCain-Kennedy, Ganske-Dingell bill.

Unfortunately, for the nation, President Bush has chosen to block a real Patients' Bill of Rights – coming out against the McCain-Kennedy, Ganske-Dingell bill.

As on so many other issues that have been discussed in this report, Bush has chosen to represent the **SPECIAL INTERESTS** that contributed to his campaign – rather than the interests of ordinary families. Indeed, the HMO industry and the health insurance industry gave at least \$2.7 million to Bush's presidential campaign and transition. Specifically, \$1,626,093 was given by these industries to the Bush campaign, according to the Center for Responsive Politics. Another \$1,145,000 was given to the Bush inaugural fund. (www.opensecrets.org) Furthermore, the HMO and health insurance industries gave at least \$41.7 million to other Republican campaigns in the 2000 election cycle. (Wall Street Journal, 3/15/00)

Where Are Results? – Top Bush Initiatives Are Sputtering, with No Results in Sight

Furthermore, there are also not the “results” that candidate Bush promised. For example, as will be seen below, the following three top Bush initiatives (all highlighted in his 2000 presidential campaign as key priorities) are now sputtering – with no results in sight:

- ! Immediate Helping Hand/Prescription Drugs;
- ! The Faith-Based Initiative; and
- ! Social Security Reform.

Immediate Helping Hand/Prescription Drugs

Immediate Helping Hand

During the 2000 campaign, candidate Bush said again and again that one of the top priorities of the Bush Administration would be to enact a program to provide prescription drug assistance to seniors. Bush stated that, for the next four years, there would be put in place an “Immediate Helping Hand” program – providing \$48 billion over a four-year period for block grants to states to help cover the cost of prescription drugs for low-income seniors. After this four-year period, a yet-to-be-defined “restructuring” of Medicare would provide further prescription drug assistance to seniors. This was the Bush plan. Throughout the fall campaign, Bush highlighted “Immediate Helping Hand” as a top priority. For example:

“We’re going to have an Immediate Helping Hand for seniors. That means money for prescription drugs for poor and moderate-income seniors.”

George W. Bush, Campaign Speech, Knoxville, TN, 10/27/00

“I think it’s important to have what’s called Immediate Helping Hand, which is direct money to states so that poor seniors don’t have to choose between food and medicine.”

George W. Bush, 3rd Presidential Debate, 10/17/00

And yet the Immediate Helping Hand proposal – sent to the Congress by the Bush White House on January 29 – has already sputtered out. Indeed, even before the Inauguration, the January 11th Des Moines Register reported the following:

“A major portion of President-elect Bush’s plan to extend prescription drug benefits to senior citizens is dead before its arrival in Congress, Sen. Charles Grassley said Wednesday. Grassley ... said there is little congressional interest in setting up Bush’s \$48 billion ‘Immediate Helping Hand’ program.”

Similarly, here is how the reception by the Congress of the January 29th transmission of “Immediate Helping Hand” was reported by the major newspapers:

“President Bush unveiled a plan today to provide billions of dollars to the states to help nearly one-fourth of the 39 million Medicare beneficiaries buy prescription drugs. ... Members of Congress from both parties expressed a distinct lack of enthusiasm.”

New York Times, 1/30/01

“Bush has portrayed his plan as a speedy way to help the older people who have the greatest difficulty affording medication. But critics in Congress, including the chairman of two key committees [Grassley and Thomas] contend that his approach would reach too few people.”

Washington Post, 1/30/01

Hence, as Senator Grassley had predicted, the President’s “Immediate Helping Hand” proposal was truly dead **before** arrival. Neither the Senate Finance Committee nor the House Ways and Means Committee has any plans to ever mark up the legislation.

And yet, President Bush has really done **nothing** to build support for his Immediate Helping Hand proposal and attempt to change the minds of key Members of Congress.

Proposing Only \$153 Billion for Prescription Drugs and Medicare “Reform”

Not only has President Bush done nothing to promote his Immediate Helping Hand proposal, he has also shown his lack of priority for adequate prescription drug coverage for seniors by only setting aside \$153 billion in his ten-year budget for prescription drugs and Medicare “reform.”

The amount that the Bush budget sets aside for a new prescription drug benefit is **completely** inadequate. The \$153 billion is **less** than the cost of last year’s Republican prescription drug bill (\$159 billion over ten years), and the price of prescription drugs **has only increased**. Furthermore, last year’s GOP bill was deemed by most health care analysts as unlikely to provide adequate protection against prescription drug costs for most Medicare beneficiaries.

Furthermore, key Republicans have dismissed the \$153 billion figure for a prescription drug benefit as completely insufficient. Indeed, on April 3, Senate Republicans all voted for an amendment to the budget resolution that doubled the amount of money that should be set aside for possible use for prescription drugs. Hence, it now appears that everyone – except the Bush Administration and House Republicans– is acknowledging that \$153 billion is an absurdly low number.

In a nice confluence of interests, the Bush Administration has relegated prescription coverage to make room for its huge tax cut for the wealthy, which has the added benefits of pleasing the pharmaceutical industry that funded the Bush campaign. By proposing a completely inadequate prescription drug coverage for seniors, President Bush is taking the position that the drug companies have been taking over the last several years – opposing generous, comprehensive coverage of prescription drugs under Medicare. The drug companies apparently fear that such comprehensive coverage under Medicare will endanger their record profit margins.

Hence, as on so many other issues that have been discussed in this report, Bush has chosen to represent the **SPECIAL INTERESTS** that contributed to his campaign – rather than the interests of ordinary families. Indeed, in the 2000 presidential bid, among Bush's key campaign backers was the pharmaceutical industry. They gave and raised almost \$1.4 million to get him elected and into office. In fact, according to the Center for Responsive Politics, Bush was the top recipient of pharmaceutical money. This total includes \$449,333 in contributions to his presidential campaign, and \$950,000 to the Bush Inaugural Committee.

Faith-Based Initiative

Another top Bush initiative that has sputtered in these first 100 days is the Faith-Based Initiative. During the campaign, candidate Bush often highlighted his “Faith-Based Initiative” as one of his very top priorities. However, once he arrived in office, it turns out that the “Faith-Based” Initiative was only a very fuzzy concept – that has raised more questions than it has answered.

Indeed, the “Faith-Based” Initiative has received criticism from very unexpected quarters, including the Religious Right. For example, here is how the New York Times (3/3/01) has summarized the reaction of religious broadcaster Pat Robertson:

“Mr. Robertson raised doubts on his television program ‘The 700 Club’ last week, calling it ‘appalling’ that the plan could result in government contracts for programs run by non-Western religions and newer religious movements like the Church of Scientology and the Unification Church. ‘This thing could be a real Pandora’s box,’ Mr. Robertson said on the program. ‘And what seems to be such a great initiative can rise up to bite the organizations as well as the federal government.’”

Furthermore, although the American public likes the general idea of supporting “faith-based” efforts, polls show that they are very concerned about many of the details of the Bush “faith-based” initiative. For example, a poll conducted by the Pew Research Center for People and the Press and published on April 11th found that:

- ! 60% of respondents said they were concerned that religious social-service programs would force the people they serve to participate in religious practices;
- ! 68% of respondents said they were concerned that government would end up interfering with religious groups that accepted government money; and
- ! 78% of respondents said they would be opposed to the initiative if religious groups that received government money were allowed to hire only people of the same faith.

Even key proponents of faith-based efforts – particularly over in the Senate – have urged a “go-slow” approach on efforts to translate President Bush’s rhetoric on faith-based efforts into legislation. Here is how CQ Daily Monitor (3/22/01) has described the situation:

“Lawmakers said Wednesday they are in no rush to enact legislation modeled on President Bush’s plan to give religious groups money to assist the needy. Connecticut Democrat Joseph I. Lieberman, co-sponsor of a Senate measure introduced Wednesday, acknowledged that allowing religious organizations to compete for federal grant money raises ‘thorny constitutional questions.’ ‘It’s much better to take some time, try to work out those questions as best we can and then go forward ...,’ Lieberman said. Lieberman and Sen. Rick Santorum, R-Pa., omitted Bush’s ‘charitable choice’ proposal from their bill in response to criticism from opponents ranging from the religious right to constitutional scholars [the bill only contains tax components, such as allowing non-itemizers to take deductions for charitable contributions].”

Hence, as the First 100 Days comes to an end, the fate of the fuzzily-defined Faith-Based Initiative remains very much up in the air.

Social Security Reform

Finally, a third top Bush initiative that is sputtering in these first 100 days is Social Security Reform. Throughout the campaign, candidate Bush said over and over again that “reforming” Social Security was one of his very top priorities. Candidate Bush’s commitment on “reforming” Social Security was described as follows:

“[George W. Bush will] give individuals the option of voluntarily investing a portion of their Social Security payroll taxes in personal retirement accounts.” Bush/Cheney Campaign Web Site, October 2000

It turns out that all President Bush plans to do this year on the key issue of Social Security reform is “to kick the ball down the road” (as former Clinton advisor Gene Sperling puts it) and appoint a Presidential Commission on Social Security. In his February 27th Address to a Joint Session of Congress, President Bush announced that such a commission would be created.

As the New York Times (2/28/01) pointed out in its article about the President’s February 27th address:

“As he did in the campaign, Mr. Bush avoided any details about how his proposal would be carried out, including the likelihood that any overhaul of Social Security would include politically painful benefit cuts.”

As of April 26th, two months after the President’s February 27th address to Congress, President Bush continues to avoid any details about how his proposal would be carried out! Furthermore, although Bush announced that he would be setting up a Presidential Commission way back on February 27th, two months later apparently no progress has been made on putting the commission together!

Indeed, it is striking how little President Bush has discussed Social Security reform since becoming President. Perhaps one explanation is the slide in the Stock Market over the last several months – which has raised serious questions in the minds of numerous Americans about counting on the stock market for retirement security in their older years.

Perhaps another explanation for the lack of discussion by President Bush of Social Security reform is that the Bush Administration does not know how to pay for the proposal. Transferring part of the payroll tax from Social Security into personal retirement accounts would be very costly. Since Social Security taxes paid in by current workers are used to pay benefits for current retirees, funds shifted to personal accounts would have to be replaced to meet these current obligations. Indeed, candidate George W. Bush acknowledged these large “transition” costs during the campaign. For example, during the third presidential debate, candidate Bush acknowledged:

“You bet, we need to take a trillion dollars out of that \$2.4 trillion [Social Security] surplus [to set up individual accounts].”

Hence, perhaps the real reason that the Bush Administration has been so silent on Social Security reform is that so far the Administration still has no idea how to pay for the enormous \$1 trillion cost of their proposal.

Hence, during these first 100 days, Social Security reform is a third top Bush initiative that continues to sputter – with no results and no clear indication how Bush’s objectives will be achieved.

In Their Own Words: Bush, Cheney Talking Down the Economy

CHENEY: "There's growing evidence out there that the economy is slowing down. We're seeing it in automobile sales and a lot of other areas, earnings falling of for corporations, and we may well be on the front edge of a recession here. And I would hope that would change people's calculations with respect to the wisdom of the kind of tax cuts that [Governor] Bush has recommended. But we do, in fact, need to take into account those economic circumstances... Now, I'm not an economist. I am just following it enough to know and to see out there that there is growing evidence that the economy is slowing down and I would think the kinds of tax changes we recommended and Governor Bush recommended, especially in terms of reducing marginal rates, for example, are, in fact, exactly what needs to be done with respect to providing the kinds of stimulus to ensure the redemption of long term economic growth." (Meet the Press, December 3, 2000)

CHENEY: "We've got an economy that's slowing down, where we could conceivably get into a recession down the road, where tax cuts'll be important." (Face the Nation, December 17, 2000)

BUSH: "There are some warning signs on the horizon." (Wolf Blitzer Reports, December 21, 2000)

CHENEY: "There does seem to be a lot of warning evidence out there. It's not just something that we're seeing, but a lot of evidence that, in fact, the economy has slowed down some... Whether or not this ultimately results in a recession, that is negative real growth, nobody knows at this time." (Wolf Blitzer Reports, December 21, 2000)

BUSH: Even when most economists were encouraged by January's positive retail sales numbers, Bush seemed desperate to spin the news, claiming that "it was one good statistic amongst a sea of dismal statistics." (The Newshour with Jim Lehrer, February 13, 2001)

BUSH: In the president's address to a joint session of Congress, he spoke of "warning signs" such as "increasing layoffs, rising energy prices." (Washington Post, 3/15/01)

BUSH: "Good morning. For several months, economic indicators have pointed toward a slowdown, and now many Americans are starting to feel its impact. The stock market is causing worries, high energy prices are straining family budgets and some workers and small-business people have been directly affected by layoffs and slowing retail sales." (Radio Address, 3/18/01)

CARD (Chief of Staff): Mr. Bush put together his budget plan "before we knew that the dark cloud hovering over our economy was going to be as dark as it appears to be. This is a very dark cloud hanging over this economy right now." (The Times of London, 3/26/01)

Bush & Foreign Policy: The First 100 Days

The first 100 days of the Bush Administration has been marked by a national security policy that has been described by experts, foreign officials, commentators and the media at various times as confused, contradictory, isolationist, or nostalgic for the Cold War.

These labels would be unfair if they weren't accurate. But, unfortunately, they each describe effectively one or more national security actions the Bush Administration has undertaken since January 20th. Despite George W. Bush's campaign pledges to restore American leadership in the world, his initiatives in the national security arena during the first 100 days of his presidency indicate that the principles that guide this Administration are essentially isolationism, unilateralism and disengagement.

The utilization of these principles in undertaking the policy initiatives outlined below has undermined U.S. leadership, alienated our allies, provoked potential adversaries, and contributed to an increase in security threats that will have serious implications for the United States.

- C Since its first days, the Bush Administration has repeatedly stated its intention to deploy a massive but as yet unproven National Missile Defense network. This course has raised serious concerns among our closest allies and treaty partners, and threatens to undermine the arms control and security framework that the U.S. worked to construct over the past 50 years.
- C In February, after Secretary of State Colin Powell assured President Kim Dae Jung of South Korea that the Bush Administration would continue U.S. efforts to seek a negotiated agreement with North Korea on missile production and exports, President Bush himself said at a press conference with President Kim that North Korea is not to be trusted and that his Administration would not pursue negotiations.
- C Also in February, the Bush Administration embarked on a bombing campaign against certain radar and command sites in Iraq without consulting with key allies or the Congressional leadership. This event, just days before Secretary Powell's first trip to the region to generate support for a new U.S. approach to Iraq, set back U.S. efforts to restore a consensus among nations in the region regarding sanctions against Iraq and the need for renewed U.N. inspections.
- C As part of its budget proposal for FY 2002, the Bush Administration has proposed drastically cutting Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) programs in Russia. These programs, initiated by Senators Nunn, Lugar and Domenici, have enhanced U.S. security by funding the destruction of Russian missiles, the storage of nuclear-related materials, and the prevention of sensitive exports to rogue nations.

- C The Bush Administration has backed away from the essential mediating role it has performed for the past quarter century in the Middle East peace process. Not only has the Administration publicly stated that it will no longer play an active role in the region, but it has eliminated the position of special envoy to the region and has terminated the CIA's role as facilitator in security talks between Israeli and Palestinian officials. Most recently, Secretary Rumsfeld has reportedly suggested that the U.S. abruptly remove the U.S. contingent from the multinational peacekeeping force that has promoted stability on the Sinai peninsula for the past two decades.

And the results in the region has been disastrous. Since January 20th, the situation in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza has deteriorated so much that Palestinian terrorist attacks and strong Israeli reactions to them have become almost everyday events. But rather than seek mechanisms by which to reduce the hostilities, the Bush Administration has been largely content issuing statements from the sidelines.

- C The Bush Administration has failed to lead efforts within NATO to stem the violence in Macedonia. After the United States led the way in Bosnia and Kosovo to bring stability and security to the region, the absence of leadership in addressing the Macedonia problem has been met with concern by U.S. allies and adversaries.

- C Last week, Vice President Cheney's secretive Energy Task Force suggested that the Bush Administration allow the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act to expire later this year, in order to permit U.S. companies to become involved in oil projects in these rogue nations. The purpose of this act, which was adopted by Congress in 1996, is to prevent these rogue states from acquiring the hard currency needed to support terrorism and purchase weapons of mass destruction and missile components that can deliver them against the United States or allies such as Israel.

- C In just the past few days the Administration has taken a series of seemingly contradictory actions relating to China that could seriously undermine an already fragile relationship and threaten regional security. First, the Administration announced that it would not accede to Taiwan's request to purchase destroyers with advanced command and control systems, despite the fact that China has substantially increased the number of military forces on the mainland side of the Taiwan Strait. It also said that it would terminate its annual review of Taiwan's defensive needs and the U.S. military equipment that should be made available for Taiwan's defense. Subsequently, President Bush stated publicly that while he was comfortable rejecting Taiwan's request, he was at the same time prepared to send whatever U.S. military forces were necessary into battle against a Chinese attack on Taiwan. These statements, coming just days after the crew of a Navy surveillance aircraft returned home after 11 days in Chinese detention, reflect either the absence of a policy toward China or a reckless one that could have serious consequences for America's national security interests.